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Saipan Tribune

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Fishermen relief assistance checks have arrived. PAGE 3
Hearing on motion to dismiss E-Land's suit is pushed back. PAGE 7

$1

IPI officials dodge jail time

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Casino operator Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC averted jail time for its officials by finally making payments toward federal court-imposed sanctions in the lawsuit filed by a former IPI employee alleging discrimination.

Following a hearing yesterday, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona discharged IPI of its contempt in the lawsuit filed by its former

See IPI on Page 4

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

LAST DAY FOR EARLY VOTING

Commonwealth Election Commission executive director Kayla S. Igitol, standing right, joins the team that screens early voters to make sure they observe COVID-19 safety protocols at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe before entering to cast their vote. CEC expects a good number of voters today, Friday, which is the last day of the seven-day early voting for the special election of the House of Representatives vacant Precinct 3 seat.

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TOGETHER, WE CAN

By MATT DELEON GUERRERO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Matt Deleon Guerrero is an economist with Hive Analytics, a Saipan-based data analytics and research firm specializing in services for businesses that want to better understand their economy and business climate. He serves as chairman of the Fiscal Economic Diversification Committee for the GCEA, an advisory council for Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios. The GCEA's mission is to improve the quality of life in the Marianas for all residents.

Investment Incentive Act of 2021 will offer opportunities for a sustainable and quality economy

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

Today, Oct. 15, the Senate holds its fourth day of its regular session on Rota, and part of the agenda is the final reading of House Bill 22-70 or the Investment Incentive Act of 2021 authored by Rep. Angel Demapan, which was unanimously passed by the

See INVESTMENT on Page 4

CNMI COVID case total now 282

4-month-old infant among Guam's latest COVID-related deaths

By JOSHUA SANTOS
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REPORTER

One more incoming traveler has tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the CNMI's total to 282, according to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. yesterday.

In Guam, the Joint Information Center reported Tuesday and Wednesday the island's five recent COVID-19-related deaths. This was followed by another JIC report last night that stated that Guam posted another three COVID-19-related deaths, including a

See CNMI on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 7:59pm, Oct. 14, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Fully Vaccinated: **82.9%**

Days since last community transmission: **204**

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	30,274
Fully Vaccinated:	29,629
Moderna	
Initiated:	4,880
Fully Vaccinated:	4,675
Janssen	
Fully Vaccinated:	821

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	16,595	95	16,690
Recovered	13,429	44	13,473
Active	2,900	95	2,995
Deaths	219	3	222

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	281	1	282
Traced via Travel Screening	244	1	245
Traced via Community Screening	37	0	37
Deaths	3	0	3

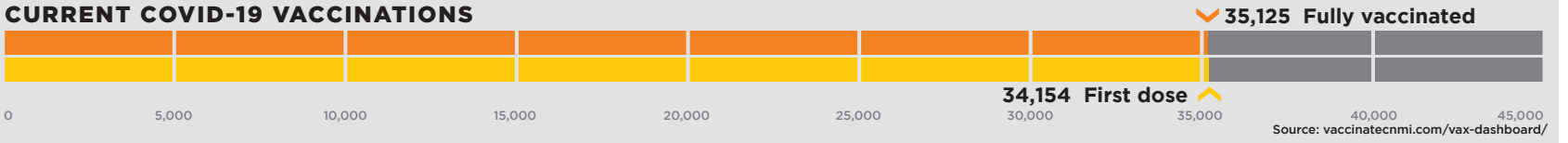
Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



Source: vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

INSIDE

LOCAL

NMC's Staff Senate names three employees as its "Staff of the Quarter" awardees.

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BUSINESS

Surging consumer prices in September sent inflation up 5.4% from where it was last year.

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LIFE & STYLE

Six years after her last album, Adele says her new project, "30," will be released on Nov. 19.

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Local

Precinct 3 special polls tomorrow

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the seven-day early voting at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe ending today, Friday, voting will shift to the Oleai and Garapan elementary schools tomorrow, Saturday, which is the day of the Special Election.

As of Wednesday, there have already been a total of 936 early voters, said Commonwealth Election Commission executive director Kayla S. Igitol yesterday.

Igitol said 91 voters from San Jose and 27 from Garapan, for a total of 118, voted yesterday.

Precinct 3 has 3,613 registered voters.

Igitol said they have not encountered major challenges. "It's been really smooth these past few days," she said, as she encouraged Precinct 3 voters to exercise their right to vote and make it count.

Igitol anticipates good number of voters to come today, Friday, being the last day of early voting.

For Saturday's election day, the designated polling place for Precinct 3A or San Jose voters is the Oleai Elementary School cafeteria. For Precinct 3B- 1 and 2 or Garapan voters, the designated polling venue is the Garapan Elementary School cafeteria.

Igitol said they are hoping that tabulation of votes will start at 7:15pm Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

She said the ban on sale or purchase of alcohol will only be during Saturday's election day, from 7am to 7pm. Under the election law, exempted from the ban are concession stands on Managaha Island, CNMI airports, casino facilities, hotels, resorts, or golf resorts.

Corina L. Magofna of the NMI Democratic Party and Grace "Pitu" Sablan Vaiagae of the NMI Republican Party are squaring off to fill the House of Representatives Precinct 3 seat left vacant by the sudden passing of representative Ivan A. Blanco last July 23.

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BOO!

Fishermen relief assistance checks have arrived

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres announced yesterday that assistance for the CNMI's fishing community should be ready for pick up this afternoon, Friday.

According to Epiphanio E. Cabrera Jr., administrator of the Office of Grants Management and State Clearinghouse, the awards arrived the morning of Oct. 14, 2021. The CNMI Fishermen Relief Program was made possible through funding assistance received from CARES Act (Section 12005), which provided assistance to tribal, subsistence, commercial, and charter fishery participants affected by the novel coronavirus.

Within the CNMI, there were a total 1,205 applicants to the fisheries program. Of the said total, there are a total of 1,180 awards to the CNMI under the subsistence and commercial programs—1,153 of 1,172 subsistence applications and 27 of 33 commercial applicants.

When asked just how much assistance each applicant received, Cabrera said each subsistence applicant was to receive a one-time payment of $755.68.

"Commercial applicant awards are based on figures provided by the business that reflected actual loss. Award disbursements were based on a formula put together by the CNMI Division of Fish & Wildlife and approved by the Pacific State Marine Fisheries Commission. The CNMI received an appropriation of $1 million to the program of which $871,299.04 was distributed among subsistence fishermen and $97,919.09 to commercial applicants. The remaining funds went to administrative fees on both state and commission levels," said Cabrera.

Applicants are being asked to visit their local post office for their awards starting this Friday afternoon. Tinian and Rota awards may take additional days for distribution due to transit times to the islands.

"We would like to thank the public's patience and understanding throughout the past few months and also reminds the CNMI fisheries community of a second round of Fisheries Relief Assistance that will be coordinated through the Department of Lands and Natural Resources' Division of Fish and Wildlife. Special recognition and appreciation to the Office of Grants Management led by administrator Epi Cabrera and his hardworking team for leading this initiative," said Torres.

All concerns and inquiries regarding the distributed awards should be addressed to:
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
205 SE Spokane St, Suite 100
Portland, OR 97202-6487 ***(PR)***

Torres finalizes composition of garbage collection task force

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres confirmed yesterday that he has already finalized the composition of the CNMI Universal Garbage Collection Task Force that he recently created to address problems with trash, littering, and illegal dumping in the Commonwealth.

Torres said that KKMP radio's Gary Sword is the chairman of the Universal Garbage Collection Task Force. At a press briefing Friday last week, the governor had already hinted that Sword will be named the task force's chairman, but stated that he will be formalizing the task force's composition early this week.

The governor said he will be formalizing that task force last Tuesday.

He said the need for the task force is critical and that he decided to create one a couple weeks ago.

Torres said it's just a matter of time before the composition of who Sword's team members would be. He said at the end of the day, they will have representatives from Rota and Tinian under the Mayor's Office or the mayors themselves.

"But definitely we'll [identify] the right entity in the executive order," said Torres, hinting that he is planning to add one or two more in the community who have a strong background in garbage collection, whether it's data or actual private companies in the past.

The task force will consist of the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and Office of Planning and Development. Additional government agencies may be added from time to time and as deemed necessary by the task force chairman.

GOP staying on the high road

Editor's Note: *The following is a statement from the NMI Republican Party .*

Yesterday, a month-old video was being circulated of what was a private moment and sorrowful situation for the family of the late representative, Ivan Alafanso Blanco.

Grace "Pitu" Sablan Vaiagae has run a clean and positive campaign. The release of this video exploits the hurt and pain of a family at the time of their mourning. It is low, and it goes against our values and the love and respect we have among ourselves as a Pacific people.

"The passing of Ivan is still a deeply painful and stressful time in our family's life. I humbly ask for your understanding and compassion for my sister Carmen and the family," said Sablan Vaiagae.

The CNMI Republican Party and the Committee to Elect Grace "Pitu" Sablan Vaiagae advise their supporters to stay on the high road by continuing to run a clean and positive campaign.

The CNMI Republican Party is proud of Grace for being a strong, courageous woman who can shake this off and move forward. Her positivity, platform, and qualifications are what make her the best choice to fill the vacancy of the late statesman, her brother-in-law, Ivan A. Blanco.

She has set the standard for a clean and positive campaign built on a solid history of performance and is an integral part of an amazing slate of qualified candidates who will serve our people well in the 2022 elections. ***(PR)***

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Youth Congress wants to be a PPP partner

Members of the 18th Youth Congress are shown in a file photo during their inauguration. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The 18th Youth Congress has requested the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors to include the Youth Congress as its partner in its Public Private Partnership, a program that enhances destination sites in the CNMI.

In a resolution that the Youth Congress recently passed, the Youth Congress senators expressed their desire to participate in the council's PPP's destination enhancement program.

Authored by Youth Sen. Easton Joel C. Dela Cruz, the resolution described PPP's success as overwhelming and noted that the destination transformation enhancement can be seen and enjoyed by residents and visitors throughout Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

The resolution also encourages all youth in the CNMI to join the PPP program.

The Youth Congress also commends the GCEA for its successful PPP destination enhancement of the CNMI's natural sites, sports facilities, and attractions.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres created the GCEA on May 19, 2020, to lead the CNMI through the turbulent pandemic in fostering a creative, viable, and resilient economy in the Commonwealth. The council began requesting to foster PPPs in the development and maintenance of CNMI parks, tourist sites, and sports facilities. A year later, Dela Cruz said, more than 50 partners from the public and private sectors have stepped up and joined the council's destination transformation campaign and have adopted more than 50 sites throughout Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, including parks, sports facilities, and nature sites.

He said the GCEA assists partners by providing equipment and tools that they can use to maintain the sites. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

IPI

From Page 1

employee, Joshua Gray.

Gray's lawyer, William Fitzgerald, notified the court that, as of yesterday, IPI fully paid off Gray's attorneys' fees and costs in the amount of $19,616.25, purging itself of contempt.

In a notice filed by IPI counsel Stephen Nutting, payment was made in advance of the deadline. IPI made its first payment following the show cause hearing back on Oct. 7, when the court initially found it in contempt anew.

IPI's first payment totaled $6,616.25. IPI's second payment, which was issued on Oct. 11, amounted to $13,000, Nutting said, fully paying off the sanction imposed by the court to lift the contempt order against his client.

In the suit filed by the U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding a former employee who claimed sexual harassment, Fitzgerald updated and apprised the court that IPI was in substantial compliance as only some amount was paid but not the full amount.

Nutting told the court that funds should be available by next week and his client, IPI would be able to pay off what is owed under the judgment in the EEOC case.

According to a previous article on the *Saipan Tribune,* Manglona entered last Friday findings of contempt anew against IPI for failure to pay the sanctions ordered in favor of Gray, and for failure to comply with discovery orders.

Manglona ordered IPI to pay, in full, the $19,616.25 ordered by the court in a previous sanction no later than Oct. 14. If IPI failed to comply with the order, its officials, including, but not limited to, chief executive officer Ray Yumul and vice president for Public Affairs Tao Xing, faced possible jail time.

Meanwhile in the sexual harassment suit, Manglona found IPI in contempt for failure to pay the monthly payments for August and September 2021 as stated in the consent decree between IPI and the EEOC.

Manglona also ordered IPI Holdings, Ltd., mother company of IPI CNMI, to pay the balance no later than Friday, Oct. 29, for the balance outstanding including daily per diem and interest pursuant to the consent decree. Payments must also be made directly to the claimants or EEOC.

CNMI

From Page 1

4-month-old infant.

Also, as of Wednesday, the JIC in Guam said that there are 61 individuals in Guam that are hospitalized with COVID-19. Of the 61, 34 are unvaccinated and one is ineligible to receive a vaccine.

CHCC said the CNMI's latest case was identified by travel screening and was confirmed positive through arrival testing on Oct. 13. The individual was quarantined and is being actively monitored, and CHCC has initiated contact tracing for those who were in most immediate contact with the traveler. There are currently no active, COVID-19-related hospitalizations in the CNMI, CHCC added.

The five deaths in Guam that occurred from Oct. 10 to Oct. 13 included the following:

- The 215th COVID-19-related death in Guam was an unvaccinated 73-year-old female with underlying health conditions. She tested positive for COVID-19 on Sept. 16 and was pronounced dead at the Guam Regional Medical City on Oct. 10.
- The 216th was an unvaccinated 71-year-old female with underlying health conditions. She tested positive on Oct. 2 and was pronounced dead at the Guam Memorial Hospital on Oct. 11.
- The 217th was an unvaccinated 75-year-old female with unknown underlying health conditions. She tested positive on Oct. 12 and was pronounced dead on arrival at GRMC on Oct. 12.
- The 218th was an unvaccinated 52-year-old male with underlying health conditions. He was a known positive COVID-19 patient and was pronounced dead at GRMC on Oct. 12.
- The 219th was an unvaccinated 64-year-old female with underlying health conditions. She tested positive for Oct. 13 and was pronounced dead at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam on Oct. 13.

Last night, JIC Guam said that three more deaths were reported in the U.S. territory:

- The 220th COVID-19-related fatality was a 4-month-old male who was pronounced dead on arrival at the USNH on Oct. 13, 2021.
- The 221st COVID-19-related fatality occurred at the GRMC on Oct. 14, 2021. The patient was a 64-year-old male, vaccinated, with underlying health conditions. He tested positive on Sept. 24, 2021, and was admitted on Sept. 29, 2021.
- The 222nd COVID-19-related fatality occurred at GRMC on Oct. 14, 2021. The patient was a 21-year-old female, unvaccinated, with underlying health conditions. She tested positive upon admission on Sept. 28, 2021.

Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero offered Tuesday her condolences to the families of those who lost loved ones to COVID-19.

"This pandemic has yet again taken more people from us. [First gentleman Jeff Cook, Lt. Gov. Joshua Tenorio, and I] offer our deepest condolences to the families of our most recent COVID-19 deceased. We pray for the healing of their hearts and strength to overcome these tragic events," said Leon Guerrero.

INVESTMENT

From Page 1

House of Representatives this past August.

The Governor's Council of Economic Advisers looks forward to the passage of the bill that would give the Marianas the competitive edge in attracting quality investors, modernize our approach in conducting business in the Marianas, and support the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority's efforts in diversifying our economy.

H.B. 22-70 was built on the framework created in the Investment Incentive Act of 2000. This original act was developed for its time, providing the incentives the Marianas had at its disposal. It addressed the impacts on the tourism industry that resulted from the Asian financial crisis and the looming departure of the manufacturing economy. Since 2000, there have been minimal amendments to this approach, locking in targeted industries and minimum capital investment requirements of the circumstances and objectives of that period. Through these amendments, the Marianas will be given the ability to remain flexible to the demands of the global market and the evolving needs of our community for today's economy and the global economy of the future.

The Marianas requires key investments to be able to expand its opportunities in the market. One example is the development of a convention center to attract and develop the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibition, or MICE, tourism market. Without it, access to this sought-after market remains out of reach for the visitor industry.

The need for key investments goes even further and constrains our ability to achieve economic diversity. We need more private sector investment in utility services, healthcare, and modern commercial spaces. We also need to strategically plan for how the Marianas can best make use of its underutilized public lands.

Through the Investment Incentive Act of 2021, CEDA, the lead agency that would pursue investment opportunities for the Marianas, will be equipped with tools to be competitive in the global race for qualified investors. The creation of the Strategic Investment Program contained in HB 22-70 will empower CEDA to seek out the needs of the community and the economy. It can pursue investments that will have the greatest impact on the Commonwealth, assess its marketability, and make strategic economic priority projects investment ready for qualified investors.

Although H.B. 22-70 is not the final solution to the Marianas' economic development objectives, it is critical in addressing some of the most pressing hurdles to sustainable economic growth. For example, it will provide a simplified investment process, allow the Marianas to define its economic development objectives, and create a system for performing due diligence on investors to ensure their ability to complete and successfully operate an investment.

Together, we can reform the Marianas' approach to economic development through a critical piece of legislation and renew our focus on investments driven by the priorities of the Commonwealth and its people and offer a more sustainable and quality economy in the years to come.

NMC's Staff Senate recognizes outstanding employees

NMC
Northern Marianas College's Staff Senate recently recognized its staff members of the quarter. From left, awardees Timberley Ngewakl, Robert Suzuki Sr., and Carla Sablan.

The Northern Marianas College's Staff Senate named three employees as "Staff of the Quarter" awardees as part of its efforts to recognize and acknowledge staff members' hard work and commitment to students.

The three individuals are NMC Foundation program coordinator Carla Sablan, supply specialist II Robert Suzuki, and budget analyst Timberly Ngewakl. Each of them will receive a prize and a reserved parking slot for the quarter.

"Congratulations to Carla Sablan, Timberley Ngewakl, and Robert Suzuki, Sr.," NMC Staff Senate president Geri Rodgers said. "They exemplify NMC employees' spirit of hard work and true care and concern for their Proa family. Thank you for your efforts towards making processes run smoothly at the college. We appreciate you!"

The Staff Senate sponsored a Fall Coffee Connection employee gathering event to announce the awards. The awardees were nominated and voted by their peers for the coveted title of Staff of the Quarter, Rodgers said.

"I would like to thank all of my fellow NMC employees for this recognition," Sablan said. "They are all deserving of this award as much as me."

Suzuki also is thankful for having received the award. His son, Robbie Jr., received the award earlier this year.

"Thank you for the recognition," Suzuki said. "I am grateful for the acknowledgement of my hard work."

Ngewakl shared the same sentiments. "Thank you staff members and Staff Senators for this encouraging recognition," Ngewakl said. "I truly appreciate the support and acknowledgement. I am so honored and blessed to be a part of the NMC Proa family! I hope this continues as there are more to be recognized for their hard work and dedication. I am excited for the next quarter's recipients."

NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero also expressed his thanks to the three employees and said that the college appreciates their hard work.

"I'd like to congratulate Carla, Timberley, and Robert," Deleon Guerrero said. "I would also like to thank them for all the work they do for our institution." ***(PR)***

Lion's club dinner in November to feature 'Greatest Showgirl '21'

By JOSHUA SANTOS
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REPORTER

The Saipan Alliance Lion's Club will be holding a fundraising dinner on Nov. 13 at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Ballroom, featuring a buffet and event called "The Greatest Showgirl 2021" that is being organized by Sharmaine Casquero.

Tickets to the event can be purchased for $30, with a portion of the proceeds going to T-Project, a trans-led nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and creating safe spaces for the CNMI's LGBT+ community. Those interested in learning more can call Casquero at 670-788-0932.

Casquero said in an interview Wednesday that she recently spoke with SALC president Anna Cabael to discuss the possibility of combining the club's fundraising dinner with an event intended to support the CNMI's LGBT+ community. Cabael approved of Casquero's plans, and the Nov. 13 dinner is now a joint event.

Casquero said the event will feature two competition segments: a "Best in Costume" and "The Amazing Showgirl." For the costume competition, contestants will be presenting originally made, fantasy-themed costumes that use the colors of the rainbow, which are colors featured in the LGBT+ pride flag. For "The Amazing Showgirl," contestants will dress up and impersonate famous Hollywood celebrities and musicians.

Casquero said that nine people have already committed to participating in the event and that she is working with T-Project founder Tyra Sablan to get more members of the community to join.

Having lived on Saipan for almost 20 years now, Casquero said she wanted to hold "The Greatest Showgirl" to continue to support the CNMI's LGBT+ community.

"Every time I have an event, I feel that it's going to be a fantastic night and a night to remember for everyone. It's about the fun and enjoyment of the audience, especially this time around during the pandemic. [The Nov. 13 event] will be a time to let out stress," said Casquero.

In July this year, the editors of American LGBT+ magazine *The Advocate* chose Casquero and Sablan to be featured on its list of "Champions of Pride 2021 From the Territories," a list that also featured Guam Lt. Gov. Joshua Tenorio, who is the first openly gay lieutenant governor in the U.S.

Casquero was recognized by *The Advocate* for organizing the CNMI's first Pride event in 2018 with a celebration at the GIG Discotheque and Bossano Bar in Garapan and for organizing many LGBT+ beauty pageants in the CNMI.

Sablan was recognized by *The Advocate* for bringing the need for anti-discrimination and hate crime laws to the attention of the CNMI Legislature, and for founding T-Project.

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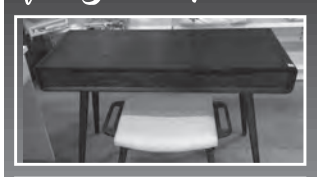

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CULTURAL AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES
FAMILY & YOUTH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
Kagman Community Center, P.O. Box 501000 C.K., Saipan, MP 96950

THE DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES IS SOLICITING APPLICANTS
FOR THE FOLLOWING STIPEND PROGRAM
CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAM and EMERGENCY SHELTER

PARENTS Anonymous® Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

ISLAND	ROTA
Children & Youth Program Two (2) Program Workers	Children & Youth Program One (1) Program Worker
Emergency Shelter Four (4) Program Workers	
STIPEND at $7.75 PER HOUR	

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:
- Assist with Parent Education Classes, Parents Anonymous®, Inc. activities, After School Program, Youth Sessions, Parent Sessions, Community Sessions and the Emergency Shelter.
- Transport participants to and from program sessions.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:
- Must be (18) years or older and enjoy being with children.
- Have 1 year experience in early childhood or school setting.
- Participate in training sessions provided by the Division of Youth Services.
- Commit at least twenty (20) hours per week to the assigned program.
- Commit to at least one (1) year to the Programs.
- Complete all necessary documents (Application form with Resume/Police Clearance/ Traffic Clearance/Business License/Tax ID Card Number, etc.)
- Have valid CNMI driver's license and a clear traffic record.
- Have not been convicted of a felony.
- Provide additional documents, if needed.

APPLICATION PICK UP: Kagman Community Center, DYS Administration Office in Capitol Hill
DOWNLOAD APPLICATION: www.dys.gov.mp or www.dcca.gov.mp
APPLICATION SUBMISSION: Kagman Community Center, DYS Administration Office in Capitol Hill
APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 21, 2021, 4:30 P.M.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Tanaka or Junnie Masga at 237-1017/1018 or through email at jtanaka@dys.gov.mp or jmasga@dys.gov.mp .

/s/ Vivian T. Sablan
DYS Administrator

/s/ Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero
DCCA Secretary

Announcing the 104th Anniversary 2021
PUBLIC SQUARE ROSARY CRUSADE
What: The Holy Rosary
Where: San Jose Beach Road – Oleai, Saipan
When: October 16, 2021 at 12noon – 3pm
For more information, contact:
Lillian Camacho – 670-285-7622
Angie & Manny Mangarero – 670-285-2610
Doris Sanchez – 670-287-7135
Rose (Ocha) Magofna – 670-783-1549
On Sunday, October 17th, 2021 at San Vicente Church Parish at 12noon (Fr. Jesse)

AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA
CNMI NEEDS FATIMA
THE WORLD NEEDS FATIMA
Coordinated nationally by Tradition, Family and Property and its America Needs Fatima campaign
Visit our website at www.ANF.org
"EVERYONE IS WELCOME"

ATALIG TO ELIGIBLE TAXPAYERS:
'Make sure to enter portal to get advance child tax credit'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Finance Secretary David DLG. Atalig is advising eligible taxpayers to make sure to enter into their web portal so they will receive their advance child tax credit.

"The portal is their ticket in order to get their advance child tax," said Atalig during Friday's press briefing.

» Atalig says next tax season is exciting because of Earned Income Tax Credit

Atalig

Finance launched the CNMI Advance Child Tax Credit Update Portal last Aug. 27.

Atalig said they will continue releasing payments for advance child tax credit through the end of December 2021 as the American Rescue Plan Act allows it.

The CNMI has been making monthly payments of the child tax credit to eligible families amounting to $250 or $300 each month, depending on the age of the child.

Majority opted for direct deposit.

ARPA, which was passed in the U.S. House of Representatives last March 10, contains the largest child tax credit ever for families. The credit goes from $2,000 per child to $3,000 per child for children from age 6 through 17. For children under age 6, the credit is raised from $2,000 to $3,600.

Atalig said they also continue to roll out tax refunds.

He said the next tax season is exciting as they're applying the Earned Income Tax Credits for all residents and taxpayers.

EITC is a refundable tax credit in the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code that helps qualified low-to moderate-income working families and taxpayers get a tax break by allowing them to use the credit to reduce the taxes they owe, and in some cases, increase their tax refunds.

"So that's a lot of exciting things happening with the Revenue and Tax of the Department of Finance," Atalig said.

Last June, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, acting in his capacity as then-acting governor, signed into law a bill that would repeal an existing law in order to make low-and moderate-income working families in the CNMI eligible for the EITC as a form of financial relief.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP22-CHCC/CGC-SOC/HT-003
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 22, 2021 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"PROFESSIONAL SERVICES"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP21-CHCC/CGC-SOC-003
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 18, 2021 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"ROTA OFFICE LEASE"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

Hearing on motion to dismiss E-Land's suit is pushed back

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The hearing on the motion filed by the Department of Public Land to dismiss the lawsuit filed by Mariana E-Land Corp. regarding the cancellation of their lease agreement has been pushed back another two months.

The Superior Court has moved the scheduled hearing on the DPL's motion to dismiss from Oct. 12, 2021, to Jan. 18, 2022, at 2:30pm before Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho.

John Lowrey, OAG civil division chief and counsel to DPL, filed a motion last month asking the Superior Court to dismiss with prejudice E-Land's lawsuit for failure to state a claim. To dismiss a case with prejudice means the case will be permanently dismissed and cannot be filed again.

"E-Land has failed to state a claim for relief for all causes of action, and its complaint should be dismissed with prejudice and without leave to amend, because any amendment would be futile," Lowrey said.

In addition, he said DPL lawfully rescinded the notice of award because the proposed lease did not comply with DPL regulations.

"Because DPL's decision to rescind the notice of award to E-Land was lawful and required by regulations, E-Land cannot prevail on its claim for injunctive relief," Lowrey said.

In his motion, Lowrey explained that E-Land never formed a contract with DPL regarding the RFP, and any lease agreement would need to be approved by the attorney general and Legislature before it could take effect.

Lowrey added that a lease that does not comply with DPL's regulations is void and must be rejected as outside of DPL's legal capacity. Had the attorney general not rejected the lease, it would still have been void, Lowrey added.

"Even if the attorney general did not reject the lease, and DPL did not rescind the notice of award to E-Land, DPL could not agree to E-Land's suggested changes to the lease and the parties would not have been able to execute a final lease. Assuming that DPL accepted E-Land's suggested changes, the attorney general did not reject the lease, and the lease was not yet discovered to be void *ab initio* for failure to comply with DPL's regulations, the CNMI Legislature would still have to approve the lease. Per Commonwealth law, DPL 'may not transfer an interest in more than five hectares of public land for use for commercial purposes without approval of the Legislature in a joint session,'" Lowrey said.

Last month, E-Land, owner and operator of Kensington Hotel Saipan, Coral Ocean Golf Resort, and Pacific Islands Club, filed a suit against DPL and DPL Secretary Sixto Igisomar in his official capacity for the cancellation of the Mariana Resort property lease agreement.

In its suit, E-Land requested the court issue a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction to prevent DPL and/or Igisomar from reissuing RFP20-RED004 until such time that the court has ruled on E-Land's complaint.

Last month, following a stipulation from E-Land and DPL, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho issued a preliminary injunction preventing DPL from reissuing RFP-RED004 pending a determination of the merits of the plaintiff's complaint that was filed on July 13.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
HR 2021-01

CEDA
COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670 234-6245/6293/7145/7146
Fax: (670) 235-7147
www.developcnmi.com

Position: Economic Development Manager, exempt
Annual Salary: Minimum $70,000.00
Opening Date: September 8, 2021
Closing Date: October 15, 2021
Closing Time: 4:00 P.M.

The Application for Employment, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be obtained online at www.**developcnmi.com** or at the CEDA offices during regular business hours from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

Saipan CDA Building, Unit 205, Beach Road, Oleai
Rota Tamara & Seven Brothers, Songsong
Tinian Northern Marianas College, Bldg. B, Rm. E, San Jose

All applications must be complete and submitted to the CEDA main office in Saipan or emailed to admin@developcnmi.com.

For more inquiries, please contact Ms. Christy Kintol, Office Manager at (670) 234-6245 ext. 310 or by email at c.kintol@developcnmi.com

/s/ Manuel A. Sablan
Executive Director

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB21-CHCC/IT-003

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 18, 2021 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"SWITCHES FOR CHCC INTERFACILITY NETWORK UPGRADE"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS INVITAITON TO BID FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

NOTICE OF INTENT TO FILE DISSOLUTION

Please take notice that Allied Mercantile Bank Corporation (the corporation) intends to file articles of dissolution with the CNMI Registrar of Corporations anytime after this notice is made.

Anyone with a claim against the corporation is requested to submit it in accordance with the following:

1. The claim shall be made in writing and shall state the name of the claimant, the amount of the claim, the factual basis for the claim, and the name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number of the person who may be contacted by the corporation with respect to the claim.

2. The claim may be sent to：sokeen168@gmail.com

3. A claim against the corporation will he barred unless a processing to enforce the claim is commenced within five years after the publication of the notice.

ALLIED MERCANTILE BANK CORPORATION

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
in collaboration with the CNMI Disability Network Partners presents:

EMPLOYER AND SELF-ADVOCATE PRESENTATIONS

Join us for a day full of seminars, talks and presentations by OVR, DD Council/AT Program, UCEDD, CIRCLES, NMPASI, CDI and more!

Get to learn about the disability resources available!

ROTA
Tuesday, October 19, 2021
Time: 8:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. -
Location: NMC Campus, Rota

TINIAN
Tuesday, November 30, 2021
Time: 8:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. -
Location: NMC Campus, Tinian

Space is limited.
Pre-registration is required.
Deadline: October 15, 2021

PLEASE CONTACT (670) 322-6537/38 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Court dismisses case filed by inmate vs Corrections

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has dismissed the lawsuit filed by a Department of Corrections inmate who claims he was beaten up in prison and was ignored when he sought medical attention from staff.

Chief Judge Ramona Manglona dismissed without prejudice the lawsuit of Xiao Ping Wang, who accused Department of Corrections officials of withholding medical attention for eight hours after he was severely beaten by another inmate.

The DOC officials Wang named as defendants in his suit included Corrections Commissioner Wally Villagomez and department officials Georgia Cabrera and Ken Camacho. Wang alleges that DOC and its officials violated his constitutional and civil rights, and wants the court to grant him damages in the amount of $100,000 for his suffering, emotional stress, and depression.

Manglona dismissed Wang's suit because of his failure to state a claim. However, because the case was dismissed without prejudice, Manglona allowed him time to amend his lawsuit and to file the amended complaint no later than Nov. 12.

"If Wang wishes to pursue his claim, he must file a first amended complaint by placing it in the prison mail no later than Nov. 12. Failure to file an amended complaint by this deadline will result in the court dismissing this action with prejudice and directing the clerk to close the case," she said.

In her order, Manglona said Wang failed to establish a constitutional violation committed by defendants for failure to provide adequate medical care. In addition, he failed to establish that any of the defendants were deliberately indifferent to his medical needs.

"Wang alleged that he had a broken nose, severe bleeding, and swollen eyes after the beating incident. While the court notes that a delay [of] eight hours for medical treatment could demonstrate a deliberate indifference, nothing in his allegations suggest that the named defendants were the ones who were indifferent to his need," Manglona said.

In regards to Villagomez and Cabrera, Manglona noted that Wang failed to allege that they were aware of his immediate medical needs.

"Wang does not even mention Cabrera in any of his documents other than listing Cabrera as a defendant. Furthermore, the filing of a grievance with Commissioner Villagomez does not evince his knowledge of any medical need immediately after the beating," she said.

According to his handwritten complaint, Wang said he suffered a massive swollen face, bleeding gums, and bloody eyes as a result of a beating by another inmate on June 21, 2020, and his medical attention needs were delayed for eight hours, subjecting him to excruciating pain and suffering.

He added that because of the incident, he suffered headaches, depression, fear, and emotional distress for six months. When he sought help and treatment for his suffering, Wang claims he was always ignored and neglected.

Wang was arrested back in December 2018 for illegal possession of a controlled substance and drug trafficking. In February 2021, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison with five years suspended.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION (NMHC)

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPENING DATE: October 15, 2021 CLOSING DATE: November 01, 2021 TIME: 4:00 P.M.

NMHC JVA NO.	Positions:	Salary:
2021-039	CDBG-DR Compliance Manager	$50,000.00-$60,000.00- per annum-UNGRADED
2021-038	Building/Maintenance Worker	$23,295.24-$25,683.00- per annum-CLASSIFIED

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be accessed at www.nmhcgov.net or at https://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; or at the Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; or email application and documents to officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net . NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW22-ITB-003

SUBMISSION DATE: November 10, 2021 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"BEACH ROAD IMPROVEMENT, PHASE 2, SAIPAN"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **October 08, 2021** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

There will be a **Mandatory Pre-bid Conferenc**e for this project on **October 26, 2021**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **November 03, 2021** to **Ms. Lorraine S. Villagomez, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ MICHAEL A. BORJA
Acting Secretary, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

Robert Tenorio Torres, ESQ.
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: 234-7859
Fax: 234-5750

Attorney for Petitioner Ezra Yummul Hensing

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF EZRA YUMUL HENSING, Petitioner.) FCD-CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 21-0385) NOTICE OF HEARING ON THE PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME) Date: November 29, 2021 Time: 9:00 a.m. Judge: Teresa Kim Tenorio Location: 217 A

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Court shall hear the above-entitled matter on this 29th day of November 29, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. for Petitioner Ezra Yumul Hensing, Notice of Hearing on Petition for Change of Name. The parties are directed to be present at the hearing at which time the Court shall consider the Petition.

SO ORDERED on this 28th day of September, 2021.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

COMMONWEALTH LAW REVISION COMMISSION
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY
House of Justice • Guma Hustisia • Imwal Aweewe
P.O. Box 502179, Saipan, MP 96950-2179 https://www.cnmilaw.org
Tel: (670) 236-9820 Fax: (670) 236-9897 cnmilaw@nmijudiciary.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 11:00 a.m.
Commonwealth Law Revision Commission
Guma' Hustisia / Iimwal Aweewe / House of Justice
Susupe, Saipan

Agenda

1. Preliminary Matters
   a. Call to Order and Roll Call
   b. Proof of Notice of Meeting
   c. Review and Approval of Minutes of February 19, 2021 Regular Meeting
2. Reports of the Executive Director and Committees
   a. Office & Staff Update
      i. Introduction of New Staff
      ii. Hiring for Staff Attorney, Publications Clerk, and IT
      iii. Office improvements, furniture, etc.
      iv. Training and Outreach
   b. Publications & Website: Status, Issues, & Plans
      i. NMI Reporter
      ii. CMC
      iii. NMIAC
      iv. Driver's Handbook
      v. New .gov Domain
   c. Miscellaneous Projects
   d. Sales and Other Reports
   e. FY 2021 and FY 2022 Budget & Expenditures
3. Unfinished Business
4. New Business
5. Public Comment
6. Place and Date of Next Meeting
7. Other Matters

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 | FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
E-MAIL ADDRESS: CPA.ADMIN@PTICOM.COM | WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA), Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, hereby gives notice that Tinian Marine Stevedore, Inc is requesting for exclusive stevedoring rights at the Honorable Jose Pangelinan San Nicolas Commercial Port of Tinian. The purpose of the hearing is to receive comments on the request of exclusivity and accept any written comments.

A public hearing will be held on **Tuesday, October 19, 2021** at **6:00p.m.** at the Departure Terminal located at the Tinian International Airport.

Persons wishing to provide comments but who are unable to attend the public hearing may drop their comments to the CPA Tinian Administration Office, attention to the CPA's Executive Director, Mr. Christopher S. Tenorio. Mail them to P.O. Box 501055 Saipan MP 96950, fax to (670) 234-5962 or email them to cpa.receptionist@pticom.com by no later than 4:30pm on **October 19, 2021.**

/s/_____
CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

PORT OF SAIPAN
PO BOX 501055, SAIPAN, MP 96950
(670) 664-3550/8
FAX. (670) 322-4710

BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
PO BOX 561, ROTA, MP 96951
TEL. (670) 532-9497 FAX. (670) 532-9499

WEST TINIAN AIRPORT/SEAPORT
PO BOX 235, TINIAN, MP 96952
TEL. (670) 433-9294
FAX. (670) 433-0790

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO.: CPA-IFB-001-22
BIDS SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 29, 2021, TIME: 2:00 P.M.

PROCUREMENT OF ONE (1) UNIT HEAVY DUTY TRUCK FOR CPA SEAPORT POLICE

THE BID PACKAGE WHICH INCLUDES THE VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATION IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING OCTOBER 01, 2021 AT THE CPA ADMIN OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ARRIVAL BUILDING.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES OF THE BIDS TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED: **"PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-001-22".** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020, §40-50-1015, & §40-50-1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, FINANCIAL INTEREST, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Date: _____

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
PHONE: (670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (670) 234-5962
WEBSITE:WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT COMMUTER TERMINAL CONSTRUCTION
Project No. CPA-SA-007-19

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide Construction Management Services for the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Commuter Terminal Construction, CPA-SA-007-19.

The project is being funded by CPA. This project is in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202 Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Angie Aguigui, at the CPA Administration Office at angie.aguigui@cnmiports.com

Questions regarding this request for RFQ statements must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager, hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office or emailed to wprater@cnmiports.com by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, Monday, October 25, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2021**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: October 6, 2021

Katori City in Japan, Saipan to ink sister-city agreement

Katori City Mayor, the Honorable Seiichi Ui, and Mayor of Saipan, the Honorable David M. Apatang, will be concluding the Sister City Agreement between Katori City, Japan, and the Municipality of Saipan on Oct. 29, 2021.

"This historic and unique conclusion ceremony will be an event to remember for years to come. Mayor Ui and I will be signing the sister city agreement virtually. After many months of exchanging emails with Mayor Ui's office in Katori City, Japan, after we met with him in person back in May 2019, we are finally on the last leg of our journey on establishing the sister city relationship with Katori City and Saipan," shared by the Mayor of Saipan.

A special thank you goes out to many individuals who helped in connecting the mayor of Katori City and the Saipan mayor's office and moving talks forward on the plan to bond the two places through a sister city agreement. "We thank Mr. Noboru Hirayama of Kyowa Construction Industry Stock Company for his relentless effort in encouraging the two mayors to consider a sister-city relationship. Mr. Hirayama has been coming to Saipan annually for many, many years in honor of the Katori Shrine at the Sugar King Park, and wanted to see the two municipalities establish a relationship that can bring our two cultures together. The Katori Jingu in Katori, Japan, has historically held ceremonies at the Katori Shrine in the Sugar King Park and Mr. Hirayama has always made the trip to Saipan every year.

"We also want to express our appreciation to former Tasi Tours president, Mr. Masato Tezuka, former MVA managing director, Mr. Christopher Concepcion, and Mr. Takashi Ichikura, general manager of MVA Japan, for their help in making our visit to Katori City in May 2019 very productive" said Mayor Apatang.

Joining Mayor Apatang on Oct. 29, 2021, for the conclusion ceremony will be Mr. Ono Kazuhiko, Head of Office, Consular of Japan in Saipan, Ms. Priscilla Iakopo, managing director of MVA, Mr. Hideaki Sawada, chairman of Japan Society in Saipan, Mr. Christopher Concepcion, a representative from the Japan Saipan Travel Association, and a representative from the Japan-Northern Marianas Descent Association. Media members will be invited as well.

"The objective of the sister city agreement will be to ensure a perpetual connection between Katori City and Saipan and the preservation and teaching of the vital history of that connection. Because the preservation and teaching of that vital history is everybody's business, just like tourism, we will develop programs that should include cultural exchange programs for the youth and adults. We will also endeavor to include exchanges in agriculture, commerce, and tourism in our relationship with Katori City, as the city is a premier agricultural hub in the Chiba Prefecture in Japan. The word Katori has a special place here in Saipan. It is the Katori Shrine in the Sugar King Park," the mayor said.

"We are very excited to welcome Katori City, Mayor Ui, his staff, and Japan, as we enter into the sister city agreement on October 29, 2021. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
RFP NO.: RFP22-OPD/DCCA-002

SUBMISSION DATE: November 16, 2021
TIME: 9:00 A.M.

"Oleai Sports Complex Development Project for the Office of Planning and Development"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

QUESTIONS Regarding this RFP can be made to Mr. Kodep Ogumoro-Uludong, Director, Office of Planning and Development at: kodep.uludong@opd.gov.mp before 4:30 p.m. November 03, 2021.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ **KODEP OGUMORO-ULUDONG**
DIRECTOR, OPD

/S/ **FRANCISCO C. AGUON**
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

The government could, and should, save billions on Medicare drug prices

When the Biden administration proposed allowing the federal government to negotiate Medicare drug prices earlier this year, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated the result would be drug price drops of between 57% and 75%. In 2019, when the Trump administration proposed doing the same thing, the nonpartisan Commonwealth Fund found that negotiating prices would cut premiums for Medicare drug plans by about $117 billion between 2020 and 2029.

So why are policymakers still fighting about this seemingly simple change? Money.

While most players in American health care are theoretically interested in controlling costs and improving care quality, absolutely no one is willing to cut his or her own salary to do it. At the moment, a great many people earn a salary based on the current method of paying (or overpaying) for drugs used by Medicare patients.

Negotiating drug prices means creating a national drug formulary for Medicare—a list of covered drugs and what the government is willing to pay for them. If a drug maker refuses to cut prices, the drug would be excluded from the formulary. That's how large employers negotiate prices, and it sometimes results in pushback when their employees are prescribed drugs that aren't on their drug formularies.

It's worth recalling how America got to a position where virtually everyone knows how to save money but no one wants to make the necessary changes for fear of alienating Medicare patients. Medicare didn't cover prescription drugs used outside the hospital at all until 2003, when a Republican-led Congress passed the Medicare Part D drug benefit.

That law specified that the drug benefit could only be delivered through private insurance companies and that the federal government could not negotiate drug prices. At the time, Republicans said they worried that the federal government, already the largest purchaser of medications, would bully big drug companies.

The no-negotiations strategy was linked to another provision of the bill that required Congress to make adjustments to Medicare, including possible benefit cuts, if it exceeded certain spending benchmarks. Making Medicare overpay for drugs would have opened the door for Republicans to make other changes to the popular program that they had long opposed. But once Congress added a Medicare drug benefit, it had no more stomach for making other changes.

The Biden administration's plan for lowering drug prices is crucial because the savings would help pay for his multitrillion-dollar "Build Back Better" initiative on infrastructure improvements. Both savings for seniors and investments in highways, bridges and improvements to the energy grid are possible if Americans stop overpaying for Medicare drugs.

The federal government currently pays for drugs for 58% of the population enrolled in Tricare, Medicaid, Medicare and the Children's Health Insurance Program. Negotiating prices on a few dozen drugs would save hundreds of billions of dollars per year. Congress should make this change without delay.

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Liz Cheney's impossible choice

By LYNN SCHMIDT
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Lynn Schmidt is a columnist and Editorial Board member of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Questions like which came first, the chicken or the egg, are irrelevant because they're unanswerable (although for the record, scientists come down on the side of the egg.) Here is a more relevant and important question. Which comes first for members of Congress: their oath to the Constitution or the demands of their constituents?

The Washington Post's David Montgomery recently touched on that latter question in an article, "What Wyoming Really Thinks of Liz Cheney." The author traveled 2,100 miles across Wyoming and spoke with voters about their thoughts on their Republican congresswoman, Liz Cheney. Wyoming has an at-large congressional district, which is the sole congressional district for the state. It is the third-largest congressional district in the United States in terms of square mileage. Wyoming registered a population of 576,851 in the 2020 census, making it the least-populated state in the country. Cheney represents them all.

She was one of 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach President Donald Trump for his role in inciting the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Cheney had voted against the first impeachment, in 2019, over Trump's apparent bid to extort the president of Ukraine. Cheney was stripped of her leadership position in the House GOP caucus after the second impeachment hearing for displaying disloyalty to Trump. Cheney was later appointed vice chair of the House Select Committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack.

The Washington Post article, which was anecdotal rather than based on polling results, reported that many Wyoming residents think Cheney betrayed them because of her impeachment vote and her position on the Jan. 6 committee. Park County GOP chairman Martin Kimmet is quoted as saying, "Seemingly she just doesn't really care what we want her to do."

Cheney also has plenty of supporters throughout the state. Matt Micheli, a former state GOP chairman, called Cheney "a phenomenal representative for our state."

But back to my original question. Is Cheney's duty primarily to uphold the Constitution? Or is it to do what her constituents want—that is, represent their interests? Of course, ideally it should be both.

Members of the House take an oath to uphold the Constitution on the opening day of each new Congress. The First Congress (1789–1791) wrote the words to the oath, although it had been changed several times. The following oath has been used since 1862: "I … do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God."

The genius behind this American experiment, which is articulated by the Constitution, is the system of checks and balances the Founders designed and the importance they gave to the rule of law. When members of Congress affirm their oath, they are first and foremost swearing to support and defend the Constitution, followed by swearing allegiance to the Constitution and finally to faithfully execute the duties of their office.

Cheney is one of the most conservative members of Congress. She is pro-Second Amendment and an opponent of abortion rights. She believes in small government, a strong defense and low taxes. She voted with Trump 93% of the time. Conservatives at their core believe in conserving the values of the Founders. Perhaps Cheney's actions since Jan. 6 are the most conservative thing she could do.

On May 11, the night before the GOP stripped her of her leadership post, Cheney spoke on the House floor. She started by stating "Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss freedom and our constitutional duty to protect it."

She went on to say "Our duty is clear. Every one of us who has sworn the oath must act to prevent the unraveling of our democracy. This is not about policy. This is not about partisanship. This is about our duty as Americans. Remaining silent, and ignoring the lie, emboldens the liar."

Cheney invoked the very oath she swore. It was as if she heard my question and answered it directly.

Cheney ended her speech by stating: "Ultimately, this is at the heart of what our oath requires—that we love our country more. That we love her so much we will stand above politics to defend her. That we will do everything in our power to protect our Constitution and our freedom—paid for by the blood of so many. We must love her so much we will never yield in her defense. That is our duty."

Hopefully, the voters of Wyoming will see that Cheney is doing both: standing up for Constitution AND representing the values her constituents hold dear.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

STORIES MATTER: Grand heist of imagination

By ALYSSA RAE DAVID
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: *This essay was submitted for the "Stories Matter" contest of the Marianas Writers Movement, an essay-writing student competition that focuses on stories of the Marianas, as part of the celebration of October as Humanities Month.*

Stories, in any form of creation, films, pieces of literature, or even graphic novels, help build the mind of the audience.

"I do believe in the power of story. I believe that stories have an important role to play in the formation of human beings, that they can stimulate, amaze, and inspire their listeners." That's a quote from Hayao Miyazaki, co-founder of Studio Ghibli and creator of award-winning films such as Spirited Away and My Neighbor Totoro. Stories give us a way to escape from our unavoidable reality, inspire people, and build on their creativity to produce works of various art. Listening to or reading stories adds spice or excitement to our otherwise ordinary lives. Stories strengthen our imaginations, so we think outside the box and open up to a world of the endless mind.

Sometimes life may feel like a chore and when we feel as if we are suffocating because of certain events, we want to run away from it all. To distract us from stressful situations, stories filled with light-hearted characters or humorous circumstances can ease our minds. Everyone deserves to have an outlet for anxiety or pressuring moments in life. Narratives help us escape from the unescapable stress and give us a clear consciousness to think through these events.

Various media of stories can inspire others to create their charming literature and such. I have always been a romantic and thoroughly enjoyed several love stories in the form of graphic novels. These visual books inspired me to become an artist and design a comic with romance, drama, and comedy. Being surrounded by many inspirations of professional and successful stories can give one motivation. For every enchanting narrative, there will be aspiring writers. They will look for guidance and use these stories to expand their imaginations.

Well-written stories give us much amusement and can stray us away from the dullness of everyday life. If one were like me, an ordinary high school student, there is no time for adventure when we are bound to our homes doing homework. With the power of stories, either in a book that uses imagery or a movie that we perceive, one can imagine what it is like in those thrilling settings. Those backgrounds could be more than just foreign countries. Instead, they can be a make-believe land or world, such as a kingdom in medieval times with dragons breathing fire and birds delivering letters. With such captivating and intriguing worlds, staying at home and reading a book does not seem boring after all.

Overall, stories can be a distraction, inspiration, or a source of excitement. Life can be difficult, and everyone should have something they can get lost in to ease their stress. Intriguing narratives build on our imaginations and fuels our creativity. Lastly, they give a sense of adventure. Experiencing these situations, I can say that stories do, in fact, matter.

Alyssa Rae David is a student of Saipan Southern High School.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Message from Carmen Sablan Blanco

I have expressed to many of you my heartfelt appreciation for the sympathy and love you have shown me and my family since the passing of my husband, Ivan Alafanso Blanco, in July 2021. To those I have not thanked personally, I want you to know we all are very grateful for holding Ivan dear to your hearts.

The pain of his loss is still so fresh, but I am continuously reminded that life will and must continue to move on for us, for our family, and for our community.

Tomorrow's Special Election (Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021) reminds us that even in moments of hardship, we must gather together, recognize those still in need, and do what we can to fill the space that Ivan has left in our lives, our community, and our government as best we can.

My younger sister Grace "Pitu" Sablan-Vaiagae has put herself forward to continue Ivan's legacy of service.

I am so grateful for the outpouring of support she has gotten through her visits to houses around Precinct 3, from the early votes cast, to those who stop by to see us and offer words of wisdom or a kind word of support. The community of all races, ethnicities, and religious beliefs that has offered support for Grace's candidacy represents the type of community Ivan sought to build: a unified community fostered around love, respect, humility, and service.

By now, many of you know of Grace's credentials and how ready she is to take on this challenge. Her education, frontline work with our children, the elderly, and those suffering from mental health and substance abuse is evidence of her compassion and ability to help our people.

I felt it necessary to share the reasons why I hope Grace will continue Ivan's term following this election.

Growing up as sisters we have naturally had our disagreements, but when times were hard, we have been there for each other. These past weeks have been a whirlwind for us all. I have been told that this pain never really leaves you, you just grow stronger to deal with it. This growth happens through the love and support of those around us, but also through the difficulties and challenges involved with rebuilding. Grace, through these all, has been there for me and my children and for that I will forever be grateful.

Grace has been my hands when I have been too tired to lift them, coordinating services and events and making sure those around us are cared for. She has been my ears to help me hear all the information, well wishes, and messages that have been poured on us. She's been my voice in advocating for our family. She may be small, but she sure is fierce—as some of you may have seen. And she has been my heart in carrying all the love and sorrow these weeks have provided us.

Grace did what any other sister would do. She stepped up to carry us through a sorrowful time in our lives. She provided when I was in despair. She provided enough love for all of us when I was at my weakest. And she rose to defend me and my family when I was I barely even able to stand on my own. As she has done for me, I've seen her do for others in her career. She did it with humility, compassion, and gentle care.

And, like Ivan, she sees the best in people, is genuine in her way of helping others, and conducts herself in an upright manner. She is a strong woman and a believer in preserving our culture and language, respect, and values we cherish as a Pacific people.

That is why Grace has my vote and I ask for your consideration to give her heart and the love she has for this community and all those who make it great an outlet to serve as a member of the CNMI House of Representatives.

From our entire family and the Pitu clan, thank you to you all for your support, love, respect, and understanding. God bless you, and God bless our Marianas and Micronesia.

Carmen Sablan Blanco
Capital Hill, Saipan

Republican women lead

Last Wednesday, the CNMI Republican Party, Mrs. Roca Q. Sablan, and I hosted women of all ages and from across the Commonwealth in a happy hour event in support of Grace "Pitu" Sablan Vaiagae. It was a wonderful event and I thank the many strong and proud women of the Marianas who came to join us.

It was beautiful to see the movers and shakers of the CNMI in attendance and looking at the sea of women joining in support of our candidate, Grace, it was clear that the CNMI government today has done so much for our women leaders.

In attendance were current Cabinet secretaries who bring with them years of experience in private sector leadership and education, chairwomen of the CNMI's various boards and commissions, business leaders championing employment and recovery in their work providing for our economy, and leaders throughout healthcare, education, government, law, and as students. It is clear that women leaders in the CNMI are thriving.

These powerful women are in good company with Grace.

Grace has the education to be a successful leader in our Legislature. Her degrees in psychology and counselling have propelled her into compassionate and successful service to school children, women, and those suffering from substance abuse. In speaking on behalf of those in need from our youth to our underrepresented, Grace can be a firm champion in policy affecting our islands because she has spent years fighting for them outside of the spotlight.

Grace has the heart to lead with humility and love. From her years counselling our children, to holding the hands of those fighting the pains of addiction, Grace has given her heart to the betterment of our community. From this work, it is clear her compassion has only grown. In listening to her goals, her passion for service is seeking to extend even farther—to the needs of our first responders, to the betterment of our healthcare system, and to the quality of life for the residents of Precinct 3.

And Grace believes in our future. As a caring mother of Alitoa and Hanamoa, Grace has found the balance of a successful professional career and raising a loving family. Seeing her with her children, and the loving family she has raised, you can see the values of character, integrity, and honesty are deeply engrained within her.

These traits will make her not only one of the great women leaders of our community, but a phenomenal representative in the CNMI House of Representatives.

I ask for your support, love, and for your vote for Grace "Pitu" Sablan Vaiagae in the Special Election for Precinct 3 this Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021.

Please vote and *biba famalaoan*!

Diann Tudela Torres
As Teo, Saipan

Supporting students in these times

The U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights have jointly issued guidance to support students with mental health disabilities and their schools during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidance points out the importance of supporting students with mental health disabilities who may be at risk of self-harm, for example students with a condition of anxiety, depression, or a substance use disorder. These students with mental health disabilities are protected by federal civil rights laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The guidance provides examples of the kinds of incidents that either department can investigate to determine whether a violation of those laws has occurred. It also gives schools and postsecondary institutions a list of action steps to create an environment supportive of students and provides educational and crisis resources for students, families, and educators. To find out more about the guidance or the ADA, visit ada.gov or call the Justice Department's toll-free ADA information line at 1-800-514-0301 or 1-800-514-0383 (TDD), or contact the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. at (670) 235-7272/3 or by fax at (670) 235-7275.

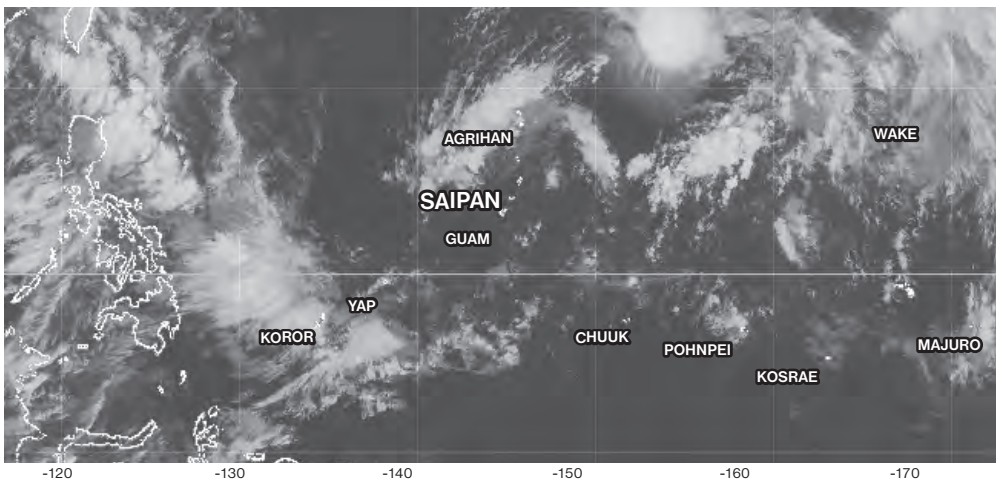
Jeanne Rayphand
Legal counsel, NMPASI

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph. Lows around 77. Highs around 87. Chance of showers 40 percent.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Lows in the upper 70s. Chance of showers 20 percent.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Lows in the upper 70s. Chance of showers 20 percent.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Lows in the upper 70s. Chance of showers 20 percent.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s. Lows in the upper 70s. Chance of showers 20 percent.
87º / 77º	87º / 77º	80º / 70º	80º / 70º	80º / 70º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:11 AM, MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate southwest winds and isolated showers are seen across the area. The Marianas are squeezed between a north-to-south elongated circulation to the west and a ridge to the east. TD Namtheun has turned to the NE overnight and continues to move away from the region. Ipan buoy shows a continued downward trend in seas just east of Guam, now down to between 4 and 5 feet, while recent altimetry data shows seas of 6 to 8 feet farther out from the islands.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	88 / 79 °F
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	85 / 78 °F
Yap	Cloudy	89 / 79 °F
Chuuk	Cloudy	91 / 81 °F
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	91 / 77 °F
Kosrae	Parttly Cloudy	87 / 80 °F
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	85 / 81 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:08 AM	5:56 PM
Saturday	6:08 AM	5:56 PM
Sunday	6:08 AM	5:55 PM
Monday	6:09 AM	5:54 PM
Tuesday	6:09 AM	5:54 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	1:14 AM	2:32 PM
Saturday	-	2:12 AM	3:17 PM
Sunday	-	3:06 AM	3:57 PM
Monday	-	3:58 AM	4:35 PM
Tuesday	-	4:58 AM	5:11 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Fair	62 / 49 °F
Beijing	Fair	72 /55 °F
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	84 / 75 °F
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	77 / 75 °F
London	Mostly Cloudy	62/ 52 °F
Los Angeles	Clear	59 / 52 °F
Manila	Cloudy	86 / 77 °F
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	67 / 48 °F
Miami	Clear	81 / 78 °F
New York	Mostly Cloudy	67 / 64 °F
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	80 / 64 °F
Paris	Clear	62 / 43 °F
Busan	Fair	77 / 66 °F
Rome	Clear	68 / 47 °F
Salem	Clear	67 / 60 °F
San Francisco	Clear	54 / 49 °F
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	76 / 61 °F
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	75 / 62 °F
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	67 / 61 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:57 AM	High Tide	1.48
9:32 AM	Low Tide	-0.05
5:03 PM	High Tide	1.81
10:58 PM	Low Tide	1.01

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 5, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:45am	7:25am	1, 3, 6
UA117	9:45am	10:25am	2, 4, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	7:05pm	8:50pm	2, 5
UA183	7:25pm	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:45am	9:10pm	1, 3, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:45am	8:50pm	2, 5 via Guam
UA117/183	9:45am	9:10pm	4, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	6
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:00am	5:41am	1, 3, 6
UA174	8:00am	8:41am	2, 4, 5, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	9:50pm	3:55am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:25pm	4:30am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	9:50pm	5:41am+1	2, 5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:25pm	5:41am+1	7 via Guam
UA184/174	10:25pm	8:41am+1	1, 3, 4, 6 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GRACE 'PITU' SABLAN VAIAGAE

Family is her driving force

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Grace "Pitu" Sablan Vaiagae arrived at the coffee shop where we had agreed to meet after her guesting stint at a morning radio show. She sat down, took a sip of her café latte and said, "It's been a busy couple of weeks but I am glad to meet you." And in a nod to how everything have been at a breakneck pace for her and knowing that she's on a short break from the campaign trail, she immediately got the ball started with, "Just call me Grace."

Vaiagae is running for the post of representative for Precinct 3 under the CNMI Republican Party banner in a special election to fill the seat that has been vacant since July due to the untimely passing of her brother-in-law, former representative Ivan Alafanso Blanco.

Vaiagae spent many years off island—she was 18 when she began to join outreach programs for the church that brought her to Tinian, Rota, and Guam. Yet even after she moved to the U.S. mainland, she continued being active in many initiatives that benefited the CNMI community. "So it felt I never really left home," she said. So when she came back to Saipan, she dove right in to her first love—volunteer work and being part of outreach programs.

According to Vaiagae, there are times when your family knows more about you that you yourself and that included being able to expand her capacity for service by represent the people of Precinct 3.

She said the Sablan and Vaiagae clans knew that she can have a bigger impact on the community and that even her sister Carmen, the widow of Ivan Blanco, knew that she is the perfect candidate to represent the people of Precinct 3. "When I moved back home in 2016, they've been asking me to run for public office because volunteer work in the community and being an educator myself, working for and with the community is a big part of my life…but then I had to put that on the back burner…but I didn't stop working and initiating projects on the side. …When my sister reached out to me and asked if I would run, she made me see what my family sees in me," she said.

What did Carmen say that convinced her? "My sister said 'You were very close to my husband. In fact, he's been molding, coaching you and mentoring you for a reason. …I'm asking you because you're the only one that knows what he's passionate about and you've been a champion in some of the projects that he's done for the community.' I said yes because my sister asked and because we needed to continue the work for the people. …A lot of his projects have already started and some are already drafted and planned…and we were going to carry on," she added.

Vaiagae is half-Chamorro and half-Pohnpheian. Growing up, she said she was surrounded by love, compassion and direction that she carried with her wherever she is and in whatever she does. She said she was taught by her father to be a people for others and by her mother to be a nurturer.

"My father was an educator who had a heart for service and people. He worked for his cousin, the former mayor George Sablan at the Mayor's Office and he had a heart for people because he did not see disparities as he believed to 'treat others like you want to be treated.' …There was never a time that he boasted of his lineage or about his Sablan family. He was a humble man. He passed away in 2008 and one of my best memories of him was that he was all about Westernization and yet the culture component was still strong and he was keen on keeping tradition and language alive in the family," she said.

She describes her mom, on the other hand, as a Proverbs 31 woman—a scripture in the Bible that says women must be God-fearing, loving, and nurturing. "My mom was a housewife and…my dad made me understand the important role of being a housewife at a time when I was young, passionate and ready to conquer the world. … He said it was akin to a full-time job that no one can take on and replace and this made my mother the strength of the family. She raised me and my siblings very traditionally and made us love languages. We spoke even the Pohnpheian dialects because she had a strong belief that strength comes from knowing our origin, knowing your roots," she said.

Viagae credits her sister for teaching her to have belief in herself but one of the most profound lessons she's learned was from her brother-in-law, Ivan Blanco, himself .

"Ivan had a slogan that goes, 'It's five o' clock somewhere' and it means that meaningful work should be finished by 5 or do what you have to do before the clock hits 5. But one of the things I admire about him is that his work as a statesman continued even after 5. …He may leave his hat in the office after work, but [his work] carried on with him and his colleagues and to the people that reached out to him," she said.

"…My life is really about family. Every family knits the community and the all the islands. …I believe there is a reason for everything, that God equip you for wherever you need to be. …Right now, I am here, doing the work that needs to be done and to continue the initiatives

CORINA MAGOFNA

Accountability, honesty, and inclusivity are her life's work

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Corina Magofna has an easy smile and her honesty about life and her plans will give you a peek at the life she lives and the life she wants to share.

After finishing middle school at Hopwood, she and her family moved to Washington state where she lived for 20 years. But even while away, her parents made sure that the values and traditions of the islands were continuously ingrained into her and her siblings.

Magofna ran for a representative seat in Precinct 3 last year. She lost by 39 votes but, instead of fretting, she saw it as an opportunity and described it as a blessing in disguise—a chance to reset and stay with the goal. Magofna said she came back to Saipan because she wanted to make a difference and contribute to the CNMI's growth. With her education and work experience from several top 500 companies in tow, Magofna came back to Saipan six years ago, reconnecting with family, immersing herself more in the culture and familiarizing herself with current events. She put her finance and accounting background to use by working as a budget officer at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., where she had a lightbulb moment.

"Landing a job as a budget officer at CUC was a good start…[but] one day, I woke up thinking that one of the big issues in the CNMI is the handling of government finances. I thought that, since I am in the field of finance and budget, this path actually allows me to use my knowledge with regard to money—how to create revenue for the CNMI and how to manage it for the people of the CNMI," she said.

Magofna stressed that her decision to run for political office was all her. "Although I talked to my husband and family, I wanted to do this on my own, without having any influence from either side of my family, telling me why I should go this way or that way. I wanted to make that decision on my own so that I can hold myself accountable for the decisions and actions that I've made."

Thankfully for her, her family has been supportive. "They know I am a very determined person, they believe in my cause and they have been supportive about everything," she added.

Cliché as it may sound but Magofna believes that honesty is the best policy. "I am the kind of person who doesn't want to make something up. It is sometimes to my detriment that I am very honest and not many people are keen about that. … I would rather have someone be brutally honest with me so I know what they are thinking about a certain matter so we can talk about it…," she said

"There's always going to be disagreements, and that's given. As long as there is mutual respect and understanding of what the goal is, then it is easy to move forward if all the cards are on the table. …I would not compromise honesty. …In my profession, I am accountable to ensure that the company is in good hands with respect to finances, that is why I take honesty very seriously and over the years, it is a part of who I am," she added. "…I've worked in publicly-traded companies and there would be times when we have to close books in three days because this needs to be shared with the stakeholders and the public. …We also follow federal rules and regulations…so it is very systematic and very structured because these companies are held to very high standards," she said.

Magofna said her exposure to finance and budget systems and procedures in the U.S. mainland have molded her to have a structured way of thinking. She sees this as a potential rather than failing and it is a tell on how she plans to work with colleagues in the Legislature and lead her constituents. "When I explain things, I really try my best to help you walk through the process that any person can understand. …Allot time to explain, make people understand what the goal is and make them know that they are a part of the big picture, which is very true to the core. Without them you don't have a strong foundation," she added.

With the House of Representatives known as the "purse" of the Legislature, Corina sees her bid to join the House as her first step in helping the CNMI "…because this is where bills are created and where enforcement starts to make sure we capture those revenues. …I hope I get the opportunity and if people do not see that, it doesn't stop there as I am sure that there are other ways to contribute my assistance in different capacities," she said.

"I consider everything as baby steps and if you really want something, you will find ways to do it. When it's genuine and it comes from the heart, no obstacles will be in the way, especially if it is for the best interest of the CNMI. …And if we can have people know that the government is truly for them, then it's a start for them to have faith and hope," she added.

IT&E expands voice and data coverage on Tinian

The IT&E RAN Operations team recently completed the installation of two cellular sites on Tinian to bring voice and high-speed data coverage to Suicide Cliff and the surrounding area. From left are Walter Paulus, telecommunications engineer assistant; Phil Gauang, RF technical specialist; Joe Dela Rosa Jr., telecommunications engineer assistant; Tony Banatlao, RF technical specialist; and Manny Madreo, tower climber.
IT&E

IT&E has completed the installation of two cellular sites on a remote part of Tinian to bring voice and high-speed data coverage to Suicide Cliff and the surrounding area.

According to an IT&E news release yesterday, it said that work officially began on Aug. 10 and was completed on Aug. 17, with the cellular sites supported by underground fiber running the length of the approximately 3.5-mile road leading to the cliff top. The sites now provide coverage along the road and up to the monument.

"Our team took on the challenges bringing coverage to a very remote area, from securing the necessary permits and permissions to acing the logistical planning," said IT&E chief executive officer Jim Oehlerking. "The success of this project is a testament to the dedication of our people to deliver connections that matter for our community. I commend the team for their hard work and am pleased to be able to bring this service to visitors and more of our subscribers in Tinian."

Prior to the installation of the new cellular sites, the area had no voice or data coverage.

"We're happy to be able to step in to meet the need of any visitors in the area to be reachable and able to call for assistance when needed," said IT&E general manager Rose Soledad. "Anticipating and meeting the needs of our community is at the core of what we do. In addition, the site has profound historical significance, and we believe it is important for visitors to be able to share the experience with loved ones."

Materials and manpower were transported from Saipan to Tinian to complete the project.

The IT&E news release said this project is part of the company's "ongoing commitment to provide a fast, reliable network and superb customer experience" to the Marianas. ***(PR/Saipan Tribune)***

'Toys for Tots' marks its seventh year in the CNMI

Together with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College will be taking lead in the 2021 Toys for Tots Campaign, a charitable program that was founded by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve that provides toys to children in need during the holiday season.

"Every year, this charitable program continues to help those less fortunate children by providing them with a beacon of hope," said Capt. A.J. Ramos, lead coordinator for Toys for Tots Guam and CNMI. "I am extremely grateful for the tremendous effort from all our partners as we continue to come together as a community and help those in need. We are consistently making this program better resulting in greater assistance to the community."

Last year, despite the challenges of a pandemic, a total of 3,400 toys were distributed to children in need on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, exceeding the previous year by about 62% more toys. The success of the campaign would not be possible without the support from all of our business community partners, as well as our government and community partners.

"We are so happy to continue this wonderful partnership with the USMC's Toys for Tots program. Now going on seven years' strong, we have provided over 20,000 toys to our less fortunate children and families," said SCC vice president Shayne Villanueva. "No child should be left without a gift during the holiday season and this is how we close the gap for the CNMI."

This year's official Toys for Tots collection site partners include IT&E CNMI, PHI Pharmacy (all locations), Saipan Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, SDA School, First Hawaiian Bank (Gualo Rai and San Jose Branch), TakeCare Insurance, Assurance Brokers Inc. (Saipan), Crowne Plaza, Docomo Pacific CNMI, Bank Pacific, Triple J Motors Saipan, Bank of Guam (Garapan), Bridge Capital, Calvo's Insurance, and DFS Saipan.

"ASNMC is excited to collaborate once again on this important project," ASNMC president Alyssa Attao said. "These past couple of years have not been the easiest, so our officers are thrilled to be able to work on a project that benefits so many of our community members."

To become a partner or for more information on Toys for Tots, visit www.saipanchamber.com/toysfortots or email saipantoysfortots@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

IT&E CNMI and PHI Pharmacy are partnering with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College this holiday season to support the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve's "Toys for Tots" campaign, a charitable program that provides toys to children in need during the holiday season.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

In this July 21, 2021 photo, a consumer shops at a retail store in Morton Grove, Ill. AP

From cars to gasoline, Sept. inflation up 5.4%

» Surging prices match a 13-year high

WASHINGTON (AP)—Another jump in consumer prices in September sent inflation up 5.4% from where it was a year ago, matching the largest increase since 2008 as tangled global supply lines continue to create havoc.

U.S. consumer prices rose 0.4% in September from August as the costs of new cars, food, gas, and restaurant meals all jumped.

The annual increase in the consumer price index matched readings in June and July as the highest in 13 years, the Labor Department said Wednesday. Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core inflation rose 0.2% in September and 4% compared with a year ago. Core prices hit a three-decade high of 4.5% in June.

The ongoing price gains raise pressure on the Federal Reserve, whose officials have repeatedly said the increases will be transitory, and on President Joe Biden, who is facing an economy of slowing job gains and higher inflation. Biden has been accused by Republicans for spurring inflation with his $1.9 trillion rescue package enacted in March of this year.

The unexpected burst of inflation this year reflects sharply higher prices for food and energy, but also for furniture, cars, televisions, and other largely imported goods. COVID-19 has shut down factories in Asia and slowed U.S. port operations, leaving container ships anchored at sea and consumers and businesses paying more for goods that may not arrive for months.

"Price increases stemming from ongoing supply chain bottlenecks amid strong demand will keep the rate of inflation elevated, as supply (and) demand imbalances are only gradually resolved," said Kathy Bostjancic, an economist at Oxford Economics, a consulting firm. "While we share the Fed's view that this isn't the start of an upward wage-price spiral, we look for inflation to remain persistently above 3% through mid-2022."

The latest inflationary data makes it even more likely that the Fed will soon begin reducing its $120 billion a month in bond purchases, which are intended to keep longer-term interest rates low. Most analysts expect the Fed to announce such a move at its next meeting Nov. 3.

Higher prices are also outstripping the pay gains many workers are able to obtain from businesses, which are having to pay more to attract employees. Average hourly wages rose 4.6% in September from a year earlier, a healthy increase, but not enough to keep up with inflation.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Overwhelmed by illegal pot, Oregon county declares emergency

SALEM, Ore. (AP)—A county in southern Oregon says it is so overwhelmed by an increase in the number and size of illegal marijuana farms that it declared a state of emergency Wednesday, appealing to the governor and the Legislature's leaders for help. The Jackson County Board of Commissioners said law enforcement officers and county and state regulators and code enforcers are overwhelmed and warned of an "imminent threat to the public health and safety of our citizens from the illegal production of cannabis in our county." Illegal marijuana grows have been a persistent problem throughout the West, even in states like California that have legalized pot. A megadrought across the West has created urgency, though, as illegal growers steal water, depriving legal users including farmers and homeowners of the increasingly precious resource.

Delta posts $1.2 billion Q3 profit, touts holiday bookings

Delta Air Lines posted a $1.2 billion profit for the third quarter on Wednesday, helped by the latest installment of federal pandemic aid for the airline industry, but warned that rising fuel prices will lead to a "modest" loss in the fourth quarter. The airline also expects higher labor costs as it hires thousands of employees to replace some of those who left the company last year, when the pandemic's impact on travel was most brutal. Shares of Delta, the first U.S. airline to report third-quarter results, fell 6%, and other leading U.S. carriers including American and United dropped between 2% and 4%. ***(AP)***

Nation

Social Security checks get big boost as inflation rises

WASHINGTON (AP)—Millions of retirees on Social Security will get a 5.9% boost in benefits for 2022. The biggest cost-of-living adjustment in 39 years follows a burst in inflation as the economy struggles to shake off the drag of the coronavirus pandemic.

The COLA, as it's commonly called, amounts to an added $92 a month for the average retired worker, according to estimates Wednesday from the Social Security Administration. It's an abrupt break from a long lull in inflation that saw cost-of-living adjustments averaging just 1.65% a year over the past 10 years.

With the increase, the estimated average Social Security payment for a retired worker will be $1,657 a month next year. A typical couple's benefits would rise by $154 to $2,753 per month.

But that's just to help make up for rising costs that recipients are already paying for food, gasoline and other goods and services.

"It goes pretty quickly," retiree Cliff Rumsey said of the cost-of-living increases. After a career in sales for a leading steel manufacturer, Rumsey lives near Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. He cares at home for his wife of nearly 60 years, Judy, who has advanced Alzheimer's disease. Since the coronavirus pandemic, Rumsey said he has also noted price increases for wages paid to caregivers who occasionally spell him and for personal care products for Judy.

The COLA affects household budgets for about 1 in 5 Americans. That includes Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and federal retirees, nearly 70 million people in all. For baby boomers who embarked on retirement within the past 15 years, it will be the biggest increase they've seen.

Among them is Kitty Ruderman of Queens in New York City, who retired from a career as an executive assistant and has been collecting Social Security for about 10 years. "We wait to hear every year what the increase is going to be, and every year it's been so insignificant," she said. "This year, thank goodness, it will make a difference."

Ruderman says she times her grocery shopping to take advantage of midweek senior citizen discounts, but even so price hikes have been "extreme." She says she doesn't think she can afford a medication that her doctor has recommended.

AARP CEO Jo Ann Jenkins called the government payout increase "crucial for Social Security beneficiaries and their families as they try to keep up with rising costs."

Policymakers say the adjustment is a safeguard to protect Social Security benefits against the loss of purchasing power, and not a pay bump for retirees.

ACROSS THE NATION

Border residents rejoice as US says it will lift travel ban

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Beleaguered business owners and families separated by COVID-19 restrictions rejoiced Wednesday after the U.S. said it will reopen its land borders to nonessential travel next month, ending a 19-month freeze. Travel across land borders from Canada and Mexico has been largely restricted to workers whose jobs are deemed essential. New rules will allow fully vaccinated foreign nationals to enter the U.S. regardless of the reason starting in early November, when a similar easing of restrictions is set for air travel. By mid-January, even essential travelers seeking to enter the U.S., such as truck drivers, will need to be fully vaccinated. Shopping malls and big box retailers in U.S. border towns whose parking spaces had been filled by cars with Mexican license plates were hit hard by travel restrictions.

Lawyer who aided Trump subpoenaed by Jan. 6 committee

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House committee investigating the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol has issued a subpoena to a former Justice Department lawyer who positioned himself as an ally of Donald Trump and aided the Republican president's efforts to challenge the results of the 2020 election. The subpoena to Jeffrey Clark, revealed Wednesday, came amid signs of a rapidly escalating congressional inquiry. At least three of the people who were involved in organizing and running the rally that preceded the violent riot are handing over documents in response to subpoenas from the committee. The demands for documents and testimony from Clark reflect the committee's efforts to probe not only the deadly insurrection but also the tumult that roiled the Justice Department in the weeks leading up to it as Trump and his allies leaned on government lawyers to advance his baseless claims that the election results were fraudulent. Trump loyalists who wrongly believed the election had been stolen stormed the Capitol in an effort to disrupt the congressional certification of Democrat Joe Biden's victory.

Wildfire rages in Southern California coastal mountains

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP)—A wildfire raging through Southern California coastal mountains threatened ranches and rural homes and kept a major highway shut down Wednesday as the fire-scarred state faced a new round of dry winds that raise the risk of infernos. The Alisal Fire covered more than 24 square miles (62 square kilometers) in the Santa Ynez Mountains west of Santa Barbara, and the number of firefighters was nearly doubled to 1,300, with more on the way. Containment remained at 5%.While the scenic region along the Pacific shoreline is lightly populated, the blaze was a threat to more than 100 homes, ranches and other buildings, fire officials said.

Airman convicted of kidnapping, killing Mennonite teacher

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP)—Sasha Krause loved words. She loved learning and translating them into different languages. She loved reading them in nursery rhymes and assembling them into poetry. She wrote about her purpose in life, her unwavering faith, the possibility of dying young and the glories of heaven—all of which have taken on new meaning to her family after her death last year, said her father, Bob Krause. On Wednesday, a jury in Arizona found U.S. Air Force airman Mark Gooch guilty of kidnapping and first-degree murder in Krause's killing. The two didn't know each other and lived hundreds of miles apart but shared an upbringing in the Mennonite religion. Krause committed to the church, while Gooch did not. Krause, 27, was last seen in January 2020 at the church in her tight-knit Mennonite community outside Farmington, in northwestern New Mexico.

Asia

In this photo released by the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the United Kingdom's carrier strike group led by HMS Queen Elizabeth (R 08), and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces led by (JMSDF) Hyuga-class helicopter destroyer JS Ise (DDH 182) joined with U.S. Navy carrier strike groups led by flagships USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) to conduct multiple carrier strike group operations in the Philippine Sea, on OCt. 3, 2021. AP

Taiwan tensions raise fears of US-China conflict in Asia

BANGKOK (AP)—After sending a record number of military aircraft to harass Taiwan over China's National Day holiday, Beijing has toned down the saber rattling but tensions remain high, with the rhetoric and reasoning behind the exercises unchanged.

Experts agree a direct conflict is unlikely at the moment, but as the future of self-ruled Taiwan increasingly becomes a powder keg, a mishap or miscalculation could lead to confrontation while Chinese and American ambitions are at odds.

China seeks to bring the strategically and symbolically important island back under its control, and the U.S. sees Taiwan in the context of broader challenges from China.

"From the U.S. perspective, the concept of a great power rivalry with China has driven this back up the agenda," said Henry Boyd, a Britain-based defense analyst with the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

"The need to stand up to China is a strong enough motivating factor that not taking this fight would also be seen as a betrayal of American national interests."

China claims Taiwan as its own, and controlling the island is a key component of Beijing's political and military thinking. Leader Xi Jinping on the weekend again emphasized "reunification of the nation must be realized, and will definitely be realized"—a goal made more realistic with massive improvements to China's armed forces over the last two decades.

In response, the U.S. has been increasing support for Taiwan and more broadly turning its focus to the Indo-Pacific region. U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price on Tuesday emphasized that American support for Taiwan is "rock solid," saying "we have also been very clear that we are committed to deepening our ties with Taiwan."

Washington's longstanding policy has been to provide political and military support for Taiwan, while not explicitly promising to defend it from a Chinese attack.

The two sides came perhaps the closest to blows in 1996, when China, irked by what it saw as increasing American support for Taiwan, decided to flex its muscle with exercises that included firing missiles into the waters some 30 kilometers (20 miles) from Taiwan's coast ahead of Taiwan's first popular presidential election.

The U.S. responded with its own show of force, sending two aircraft carrier groups to the region. At the time, China had no aircraft carriers and little means to threaten the American ships, so it backed down.

Stung by the episode, China embarked upon a massive overhaul of its military, and 25 years later, it has significantly improved missile defenses that could easily strike back, and equipped or built its own aircraft carriers.

The U.S. Defense Department's recent report to Congress noted that in 2000, it assessed China's armed forces to be "a sizable but mostly archaic military" but that today it is a rival, having already surpassed the American military in some areas including shipbuilding to the point where it now has the world's largest navy.

Counting ships isn't the best way to compare capabilities—the U.S. Navy has 11 aircraft carriers to China's two, for example—but in the event of a conflict over Taiwan, China would be able to deploy almost the entirety of its naval forces, and also has land-based anti-ship missiles to add to the fight, said Boyd, a co-author of IISS's annual Military Balance assessment of global armed forces.

"China's concept of operations regarding Taiwan is that if they can delay the U.S. presence in the fight, or restrict the numbers that they're able to put into the fight because we're able to hold their forward assets at some level of risk, they can beat the Taiwanese before the Americans show up in enough force to do something about it," he said.

Taiwan's own strategy is the mirror image—delaying China long enough for the U.S. and its allies to show up in force. It has significant military forces itself, and the advantage of fighting on its home turf. A recent policy paper also notes the need for asymmetric measures, which could include things like missile attacks on mainland China ammunition or fuel dumps.

Taiwan's defense department's assessment of China's capabilities, presented to parliament in August and obtained by The Associated Press, says China already has the ability to seal Taiwan's ports and airports, but currently lacks the transport and logistical support for large-scale joint landing operations—though is improving by the day.

World

Putin says relations with Biden is 'working, stable'

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that the Kremlin has "constructive" relations with Washington and voiced hope that mutual interests would eventually help normalize U.S.-Russia ties.

Putin, speaking during a panel discussion at an international energy conference in Moscow, also said that Russia stands ready to boost natural gas supplies to help assuage nervous energy markets in Europe, insisting that his country wants prices to remain stable.

He angrily rejected the allegations from some European experts and politicians that Russia has been holding up gas deliveries and causing energy prices to spike as "baseless political chatter," noting that Russian gas supplies have risen 15% over the year and are set to reach another record.

He noted that while Russia boosted supplies, the U.S. reduced liquefied natural gas supplies to Europe because of high demand in Asia.

"The claims that Russia has used energy as a weapon is a sheer nonsense and ravings," he said. "We are increasing supplies as much as our partners are asking us."

Putin

Putin argued that the newly built Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to Germany, which bypasses Ukraine under the Baltic Sea, would be preferable to consumers because it's 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles) shorter than the Ukrainian route, resulting in lower gas prices.

The Russian leader added that Gazprom could extend the gas transit contract with Ukraine that expires in 2024, but noted what he described as a pitiful state of the Ukrainian pipeline network.

"Its gas transportation system hasn't seen any repairs for decades," he charged.

Ukraine in the past has rejected such Russian criticism of its pipeline system accused Moscow of trying to deprive it of $2 billion in annual transit fees for pumping the Russian gas to Europe. The two neighbors have been at sharp odds since Russia's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

The Russian leader also rebuffed criticism of an ongoing domestic crackdown on dissent and independent media.

Putin strongly defended a Russian law requiring those who receive foreign funds and engage in unspecified political activities to register as "foreign agents," describing it as a quid pro quo response to a U.S. law used on Russian media in the United States.

Critics say the Russian law has been used to muzzle critical media outlets since the "foreign agent" stigma has strong pejorative connotations.

Dmitry Muratov, who won the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for his work as editor of the independent Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta, wondered if authorities would designate his paper as a "foreign agent."

Asked Wednesday if that was a possibility, Putin responded that Muratov shouldn't worry "if he doesn't violate the Russian law."

Man with bow and arrows kills 5 in Norway

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—A man armed with a bow fired arrows at shoppers in a small Norwegian town Wednesday, killing five people before he was arrested, authorities said.

The police chief in the community of Kongsberg, near the capital of Oslo, said there was "a confrontation" between officers and the assailant, but he did not elaborate. Two other people were wounded and hospitalized in intensive care, including an officer who was off duty and inside the shop where the attack took place, police said.

"The man who carried out the act has been arrested by the police, and there is no active search for more people. Based on the information we have, there is one person behind this," Police Chief Oeyving Aas said.

Acting Prime Minister Erna Solberg described the attack as "gruesome" and said it was too early to speculate on a motive. The prime minister-designate, Jonas Gahr Stoere, who is expected to take office Thursday, called the assault "a cruel and brutal act" in comments to Norwegian news agency NTB.

Police were alerted to the attack around 6:15 p.m. and arrested the suspect about 30 minutes later. The community of some 26,000 inhabitants is about 66 kilometers (41 miles) southwest of Oslo.

According to police, the suspect walked around downtown Kongsberg shooting arrows. Aas declined to comment on reports that the man used a crossbow, saying only there were "several crime scenes."

The man has not been questioned yet, Aas said.

Romanian doctors issue 'cry of despair'

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)—Romanian doctors sent an open letter Wednesday titled "a cry of despair" as the country's overwhelmed and deteriorated health care system copes with a record-setting surge of coronavirus infections and deaths.

The College of Physicians of Bucharest, a non-governmental organization representing doctors in Romania's capital, said in a letter addressed to Romanians that the medical system has "reached the limit" and that low vaccination rates reveal a "failure of trust" between doctors and the population.

"We are desperate because every day we lose hundreds of patients who die in Romanian hospitals," the letter reads. "We are desperate, because, unfortunately, we have heard too many times: I can't breathe.… I'm not vaccinated."

Romania, a country of 19 million people, is the European Union member nation with the population second-least vaccinated against COVID-19. Just 34% of its adults are fully inoculated, compared to an EU average of 74%.

On Tuesday, Romania reported daily pandemic records of nearly 17,000 new confirmed cases and 442 deaths. Data from health authorities indicate that more than 90% of coronavirus patients who died last week were unvaccinated against COVID-19.

"Every day we witness tragedies: dying patients, suffering families, doctors who have reached the end of their powers," the letter from Bucharest's doctors reads.

Off The Wall

At flooded restaurant near Bangkok, the special is a splash

(AP PHOTO/SAKCHAI LALIT)

Customers of the riverside Chaopraya Antique Café enjoy themselves despite the extraordinary high water levels in the Chao Phraya River in Nonthaburi, near Bangkok, Thailand, Thursday, Oct. 7, 2021.

NONTHABURI, Thailand (AP)—A flood-hit riverside restaurant in Thailand has become an unlikely dining hotspot after fun-loving foodies began flocking to its waterlogged deck to eat amid the lapping tide.

Now, instead of empty chairs and vacant tables, the Chaopraya Antique Café is as full as ever, offering an experience the canny owner calls "hot-pot surfing."

If you like your food washed down with plenty of water, this is the place for you.

Shortly after the water tops the parapet, the first diners arrive. Before long, the deck is crammed with carefree customers happily tucking in as if dining in a deluge is the norm.

The wait staff—some clad in rubber boots—step gingerly through the swirl that quickly rises to more than 50 centimeters (20 inches).

The restaurant, in Nonthaburi near Bangkok, opened in February in a riverside location that perfectly complements its antique architecture and décor.

But a recent severe tropical storm and heavy monsoon rains combined to raise the river's water level. Add in the tides and the result has been daily inundation.

Coming straight after a monthslong coronavirus shutdown, it could have spelled disaster. Instead—boosted by publicity in the Thai media—it's now so popular that customers need to make reservations.

"This is a great atmosphere. During this flood crisis this has became the restaurant's signature attraction. So I wanted to challenge myself and try out this new experience," 24-year-old Siripoj Wai-inta said as he munched his food with the water creeping up his shins.

The owner has dubbed the experience "hot-pot surfing." When a passenger boat motors past you find out why. The delighted scramble to avoid a soaking from the wave is the moment everyone waits for, and with one passing every 15 minutes, no one goes home disappointed.

It's TV presenter Titiporn Jutimanon's first restaurant venture. He says he was worried what would happen when the floods came.

"It turns out the customers have a great reaction. They are happy. We can see the atmosphere of customers enjoying the experience of eating in the water. So a crisis has turned into an opportunity. It encourages us to keep the restaurant open and keep customers happy."

Best of all, he says, it means he can keep his staff happy by keeping them employed. So, even amid harsh economic times, the only thing that needs a bailout is the restaurant itself.

Capone items go for $3M at auction

CHICAGO (AP)—Al Capone may have died nearly 75 years ago but it's clear interest in the infamous Chicago gangster is very much alive after some of his prized possessions were auctioned off over the weekend for at least $3 million.

The Chicago Tribune reports that Capone's family sold several of his belongings, including what was billed as his favorite gun, at auction in California, where his three surviving granddaughters live.

The event, called "A Century of Notoriety: The Estate of Al Capone," was held at a private club in Sacramento and attracted nearly 1,000 registered bidders, including 150 who attended the nearly four-hour-long event in person.

Among the items up for auction was a bear-shaped humidor as well as diamond jewelry and some family photographs. The most popular item proved to be Capone's favorite Colt .45-caliber semi-automatic pistol, which went for $860,000.

Most of the buyers' identities were kept private. But one whose name has been made public is Kevin Nagle, a Sacramento investor and business owner. Among the items that once belonged to "Scarface" Capone that he picked up was a decorative humidor for $120,000 and an 18-karat yellow gold and platinum belt buckle for $22,500.

Police: Robber is caught after trying to rob same bank again

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (AP)—A man suspected of robbing a Southern California bank was arrested when he returned to try and rob the same branch the following day, police said.

The man entered a Chase bank in the city of Fountain Valley Monday afternoon and gave a teller a note demanding money, officials said.

He fled with a "large amount of cash" before officers got to the bank, the Fountain Valley Police Department said in a statement.

Late Tuesday morning, police received a call about another robbery in progress at the same Chase bank, the statement said.

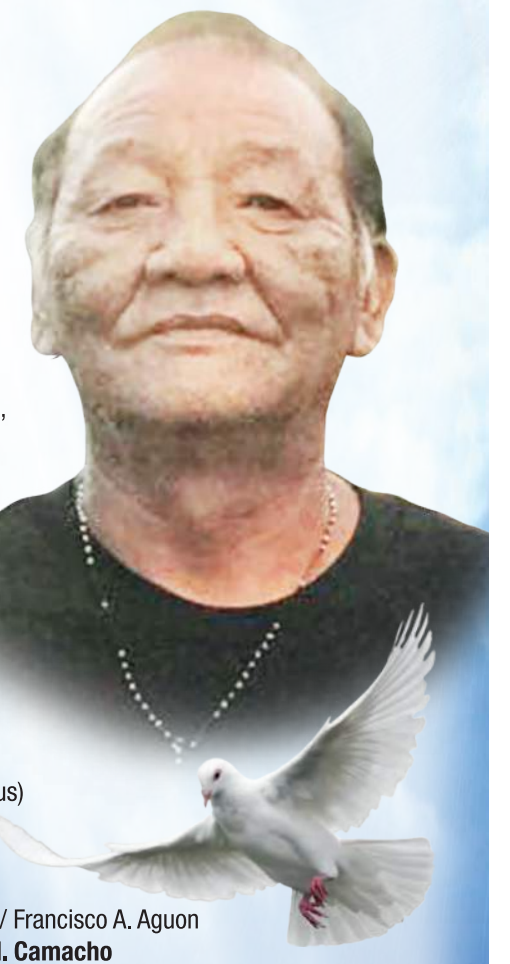
Responding officers arrested the 33-year-old suspect.

The man, who has prior convictions for robbery, was being held at the Orange County Jail for lack of $170,000 bail.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

†David San Nicolas Camacho

Lovingly known as "David Pak Pak"
Born to life: November 2, 1959 I Called to Eternal Life: October 9, 2021



In his Eternal life, he now joins:

Father: †Ignacio Castro Camacho (Pak Pak)
Mother: †Dolores San Nicolas Camacho (Katmelo)
Wife: †Victoria Nugam Camacho
Son: †Roger David N. Camacho
Brother: †Francisco S.N. Camacho
Father-in-Law: †Ignatio Nugam
Mother-in-Law: †Teresita Marfel

His beautiful spirit and memories will forever live in the hearts of:

Children:
†Roger N. Camacho (Ritaann Mae, David Julian, Maryann Raylene, Daviann Juana)
Rhonda C./Nicholas J. Gross (Victoria Jade, Phoenix Sapphire, Beatrice Pearl, Windsor Amethyst, Carver Javid)
Kelly Ignacio N. Camacho/ Lina A. Lifoifoi (Torinett Marie (Eden Nevaeh, Aezael Jayne), Kevin Joshua, Zion Stone, Zack Blaze, Zeph Rootz)
Daverrick N. Camacho/ Gina M. (Devin Gage, Giovonni Dru, Dezmon Gabriel, Giulian Drake)
Victorette N. Camacho/ Jonathan T. Blas (Nathanette Marie, Davierrin Tamiica)
Sylvestria I. Nugam/ Elton C. Aguon (Elton Jr., Sylton Juan)
Zyerlishida N. Camacho
Cozryanamae N. Camacho/ Floyd M. Mendiola (Ymani Darieus)

Reared Children: Geneca T. Aguon, John Yifith, Giqo C. Tomokane

Siblings:
Susana C./ Vinancio B. Tainatongo
Juan S.N./ †Veronica B. Camacho,
Magdalena S.N. Camacho
Theresita C./ Michael L. McPherson
Julita C./ Joseph M. Castro,
Rosita C./ Francisco DLG. Tomokane
Francisco S.N./ †Rosaline S. Camacho,
Elizabeth C./ Francisco A. Aguon
Joaquin S.N. Camacho
Caridad C./ Gerard A. Damian,
Josephine C./ Frankie B. Cruz
Leticia S.N. Camacho
Joseph A./ †Donna D. Manalo

Our beloved †David is survived by numerous brothers and sisters-in-law, godchildren, aunties, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Daily mass of intention for the repose of his soul is being celebrated:

Monday – Saturday: San Antonio Parish at 6 pm
Sunday: San Antonio Parish at 7 am

Funeral services will be held on Thursday, October 21, 2021. At 7:30am, after the viewing by immediate family members, his remains will be escorted from the Borja Funeral Home to San Antonio Parish. Responso Service and prayers will take place upon arrival. Mass of Christian Burial at 10am followed by Interment Services at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be peacefully laid to rest.

Un Dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Children & Family

Life & Style

Adele says her new album, '30,' is being released Nov. 19

NEW YORK (AP)—Six years after her last album, Adele revealed Wednesday that her new project, "30," will be released on Nov. 19.

An initial single, "Easy on Me," is coming out on Friday.

The British singer, who was divorced in 2019, said in a lengthy Instagram post that after "throwing myself into a maze of absolute mess and inner turmoil," she's feeling better.

"I'm ready to finally put this album out," she wrote.

With giant hits like "Rolling in the Deep" and "Hello," her previous two albums rank among the 50 biggest-selling in music history.

The disc "21" (she names her projects for her age while writing most of the music) was released in 2011 and has sold an estimated 31 million copies worldwide. The album "25" came out in 2015, and sold 22 million copies.

With streaming services like Spotify now dominant, there's no way Adele or anyone will reach those sales figures again. Yet she's in a stratosphere of popularity that only someone like Taylor Swift can approach in the music business.

She's also been away for six years from a medium where tastes change from month to month.

In an interview with Vogue recently, Adele said "there isn't a bombastic 'Hello.' But I don't want another song like that. That song catapulted me in fame to another level that I don't want to happen again."

She and her former husband, Simon Konecki, have a 9-year-old son. Adele's 33 years old now.

"I've learned a lot of blistering home truths about myself along the way," Adele wrote on Instagram. "I've shed many layers but also wrapped myself in new ones. Discovered genuinely useful and wholesome mentalities to lead with, and I feel like I've finally found my feeling again. I'd go so far as to say that I've never felt more peaceful in my life."

Vogue describes "Easy on Me" as a "gut-wrenching plea of a piano ballad."

"It's sensitive for me, this record, just in how much I love it," Adele told the magazine. "I always say that '21' doesn't belong to me anymore. Everyone else took it in their hearts so much. I'm not letting go of this one. This is my album. I want to share myself with everyone, but I don't think I'll ever let this one go."

William Shatner, TV's Capt. Kirk, blasts into space

VAN HORN, Texas (AP)—Hollywood's Captain Kirk, 90-year-old William Shatner, blasted into space Wednesday in a convergence of science fiction and science reality, reaching the final frontier aboard a ship built by Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin company.

Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket latest space passengers from left, Audrey Powers, William Shatner, Chris Boshuizen, and Glen de Vries raise their hands during a media availability at the spaceport near Van Horn, Texas, Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021.

AP

The "Star Trek" actor and three fellow passengers hurtled to an altitude of 66.5 miles (107 kilometers) over the West Texas desert in the fully automated capsule, then safely parachuted back to Earth. The flight lasted just over 10 minutes.

"What you have given me is the most profound experience," an exhilarated Shatner told Bezos after climbing out the hatch, the words spilling from him in a soliloquy almost as long as the flight. "I hope I never recover from this. I hope that I can maintain what I feel now. I don't want to lose it."

He said that going from the blue sky to the utter blackness of space was a moving experience: "In an instant you go, `Whoa, that's death.' That's what I saw."

Shatner became the oldest person in space, eclipsing the previous record—set by a passenger on a similar jaunt on a Bezos spaceship in July—by eight years. The flight included about three minutes of weightlessness and a view of the curvature of the Earth.

Sci-fi fans reveled in the opportunity to see the man best known as the brave and principled commander of the starship Enterprise boldly go where no star of American TV has gone before. The internet went wild, with Trekkies quoting favorite lines from Kirk, including, "Risk: Risk is our business. That's what this starship is all about."

"This is a pinch-me moment for all of us to see Capt. James Tiberius Kirk go to space," Blue Origin launch commentator Jacki Cortese said before liftoff. She said she, like so many others, was drawn to space by shows like "Star Trek."

NASA sent best wishes ahead of the flight, tweeting: "You are, and always shall be, our friend."

The flight brought priceless star power to Bezos' space-tourism business, given its built-in appeal to baby boomers, celebrity watchers and space enthusiasts. Shatner starred in TV's original "Star Trek" from 1966 to 1969, when the U.S. was racing for the moon, and went on to appear in a string of "Star Trek" movies.

Bezos is a huge "Star Trek" fan—the Amazon founder had a cameo as an alien in one of the later movies—and Shatner rode free as his invited guest.

As a favor to Bezos, Shatner took up into space some "Star Trek" tricorders and communicators—sort of the iPhones of the future—that Bezos made when he was a 9-year-old Trekkie. Bezos said his mother had saved them for 48 years.

Bridesmaid takes heat for missing shower

DEAR ABBY: My daughter "Melanie" is very close with a cousin she grew up with. This cousin is getting married in five months, and Melanie will be a bridesmaid. The shower date was announced. Then my son-in-law's best friend from childhood announced his wedding date. The wedding is on the same date as my niece's shower.

The events are about four hours apart, so it isn't possible for Melanie to go to both. She told her cousin she was sorry but she felt she needed to attend the wedding with her husband, who is in his friend's wedding party. Melanie will attend the bachelorette party in Vegas and all the other events for her cousin.

The bride's sister is giving my daughter a hard time, saying she "can't believe" Melanie would miss the shower. Melanie is now afraid she's jeopardizing her relationship with her cousins, as they have told her how upset they are. I support her decision to attend the wedding and skip the shower. There are four other bridesmaids, and another one is also unable to attend. What would you do, and how can I be helpful to my daughter without causing a bigger rift in the family?

WEDDING DRAMA, DRAMA, DRAMA

DEAR W.D.D.D.: The pressure your daughter is receiving from her cousins is inappropriate. She isn't obligated to attend any event she doesn't wish to, and her reason for skipping the shower is a valid one. She should choose a gift for her cousin, have it delivered and apologize ONCE for being unable to be there in person. Continuing to provide emotional support to your daughter is the best way you can be helpful to her.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Four months ago, I noticed a lady walking down the street. She was older, and I could tell by her posture she was struggling. I offered to drive her so she didn't have to walk. It turned out she was walking from a bus stop to a transit bus to catch it for work. She works in a different county than she lives in, so the first bus doesn't take her all the way.

Long story short, I have been driving this lady to work from the bus stop every morning, picking her up from work and taking her home, picking her up on the weekend days she works, and then transporting her to and from work. (I don't work on the weekends.) She lives about 10 miles from me. She has not once offered to pay for gas, which doesn't bother me, but she has recently started asking me for money.

I've purchased coffees for her on several occasions and driven her to stores only to find out I'm paying for the purchases. I have picked her up, and without any warning she says she needs to go to other places, too. She doesn't have a car, doesn't earn a lot of money, etc. I think I need to stop driving her, but I know I'll feel guilty because she has no one to help her. How do I end this one-sided relationship?

MIFFED IN MICHIGAN

DEAR MIFFED: The woman you have so generously befriended appears to be a bottomless pit. You were kind to her, and she is taking advantage of your generosity. It appears you have work to do on creating boundaries. Tell her you will no longer be driving her and be clear about the reasons. If you don't, there is no end to what she will ask you for. Trust me, once you draw the line, this woman will manage just as she managed before.

DEAR ABBY
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

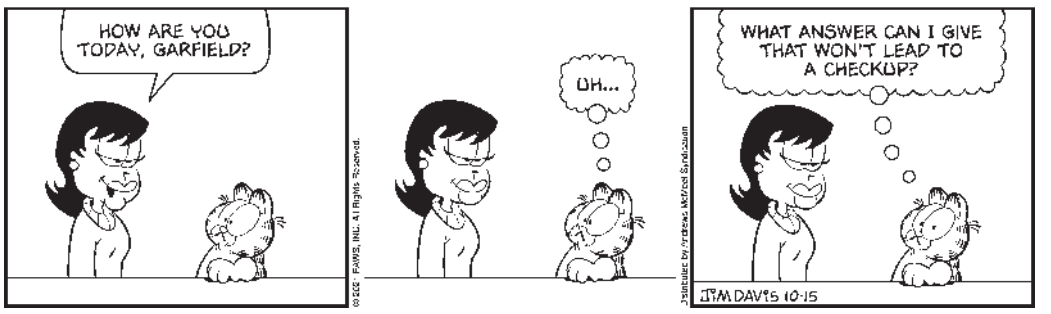
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

CAN I RIDE IN THE GROCERY CART?
I THINK YOU'RE A LITTLE BIG FOR THAT NOW.
PLEASE?
ALL RIGHT. UP YOU GO.
OH BOY!
NOW RUN DOWN THE AISLE AND LET GO!

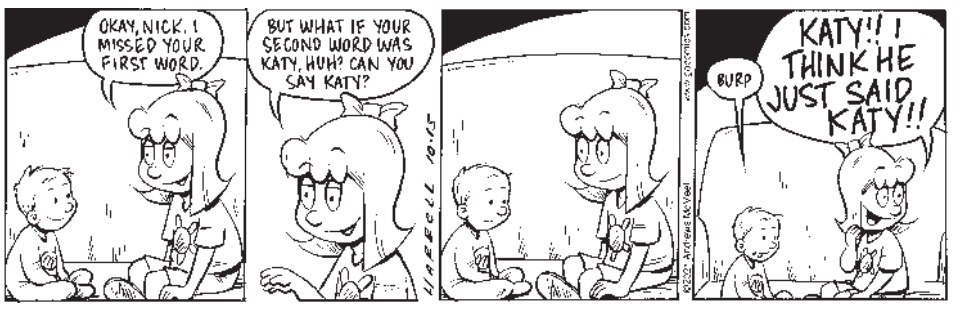
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



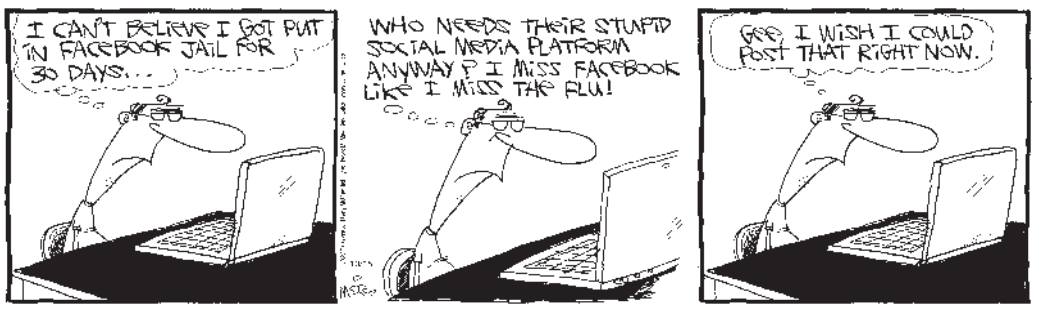
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


OKAY, NICK. I MISSED YOUR FIRST WORD.
BUT WHAT IF YOUR SECOND WORD WAS KATY, HUH? CAN YOU SAY KATY?
BURP
KATY!! I THINK HE JUST SAID KATY!!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I CAN'T BELIEVE I GOT PUT IN FACEBOOK JAIL FOR 30 DAYS...
WHO NEEDS THEIR STUPID SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM ANYWAY? I MISS FACEBOOK LIKE I MISS THE FLU!
GEE, I WISH I COULD POST THAT RIGHT NOW.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

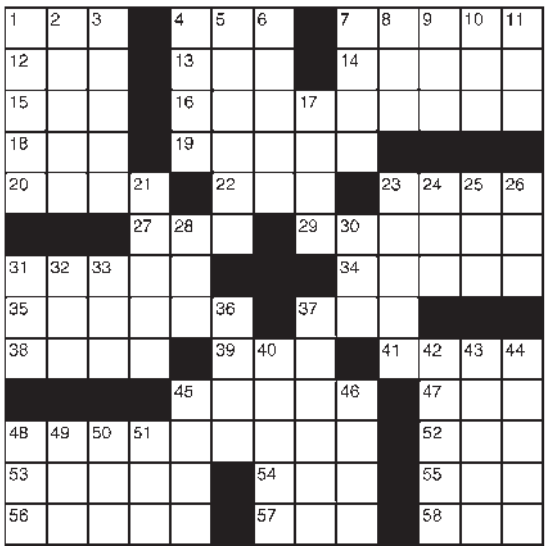
ACROSS
1 Favorite pal, in texts
4 Roast VIPs
7 Joins
12 Estuary
13 "La-la" lead-in
14 Prefix with violet
15 Chit
16 Super-intelligent
18 SASE, e.g.
19 Tender spots
20 Equitable
22 "Top Hat" studio
23 Occupy
27 Superlative suffix
29 Medical workers
31 Flinch, say
34 Missile-detection org.
35 Surround
37 Help
38 Fly high
39 Belief
41 They give a hoot
45 Choir members
47 Take courses?
48 "24" actress
52 Botanist Gray
53 Media mogul Winfrey
54 Sheep's cry
55 Animal doc
56 Get clean
57 Devious
58 Before

DOWN
1 Fleeting
2 "Shrek" princess
3 Immunologist Anthony —
4 Cuts the grass
5 Companion
6 Dodge
7 Ado
8 Einstein's birthplace
9 Depot (Abbr.)
10 Blunder
11 Plopped down
17 Drudge
21 Happen again
23 Tolkien hero
24 Leb. neighbor
25 Actress Salonga
26 Leary's drug
28 Cardinal cap letters
30 Numerical prefix
31 Scale members
32 Rock's Brian
33 Khan title
36 Motion picture
37 Unprincipled
40 Attempts
42 Hair extension
43 Surgical beam
44 Condition
45 Tennis legend Arthur
46 Remain
48 Task
49 Ecol. watchdog
50 Museum display
51 Slangy denial

Solution time: 25 mins.

F	O	B	■	B	A	I	H	■	H	A	J	A
A	D	E	■	E	M	M	A	■	E	B	A	N
B	E	T	R	A	Y	A	L	■	V	E	I	N
■	■	H	A	G	■	N	O	V	E	L	L	A
B	E	E	■	L	E	■	S	I	R	■	■	■
O	D	S	■	E	L	M	■	D	I	A	L	S
A	I	D	E	■	K	E	G	■	E	L	O	I
R	E	A	L	M	■	H	A	T	■	P	C	T
■	■	■	E	A	T	■	P	A	T	H	O	S
G	R	I	M	S	O	N	■	J	S	A	■	■
R	O	D	E	■	W	A	N	N	A	B	E	T
E	V	E	N	■	E	D	I	T	■	E	P	I
W	E	S	T	■	L	A	B	S	■	T	A	X

Yesterday's answer 10-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dominic West, 52; Vanessa Marcil, 53; Emeril Lagasse, 62; Sarah Ferguson, 62.

Happy Birthday: Take care of what matters most, and you'll set an example and build a routine that will help you achieve more than anticipated. Don't settle for less when you deserve and are capable of so much more. Dig in, and enjoy climbing the ladder so everyone can see how capable you are. Express yourself, expand your interests and enjoy the ride. Your numbers are 8, 11, 22, 28, 31, 37, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You are heading down the right path. Don't worry about a couple of hiccups along the way. Take a moment to adjust, then carry on with your plans. Your enthusiasm and competence will win favors and lead to an exciting proposal. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Take a moment to go through each step before you agree to something that can take up time and interfere with your plans. It's better to be safe than sorry when dealing with money, contracts or your reputation. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* You've got all the right moves. Trust and believe in yourself, and good things will unfold. An opportunity to take on a project that excites you will lead to research and preparation that stimulates your mind and encourages self-improvement and personal growth. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* You are on the right track, but if you are presumptuous or act in haste, you will make a mistake. Nurture what you are trying to achieve, and take nothing for granted. Pay attention to detail, and make every move count. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You'll get your way if you are persistent, generous and entertaining. Use your charm to dazzle everyone, and you will come out on top. A meaningful relationship will flourish if you are attentive. Plan something unique, and say what's on your mind. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Don't wait for someone else to make the first move. If you offer too much information, you'll put yourself in a vulnerable position. Put pressure where it's needed, and outmaneuver any competition you encounter. When in doubt, follow your intuition. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Listen to your inner voice, then proceed. It's up to you to initiate your plans and to follow through. Don't wait for someone to jump in and take over. Be demonstrative, set the pace and cross the finish line first. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Keep a low profile and finish what you start, but don't present anything until you are satisfied with the results and details. Too much information will lead to confusion or interference. Exude confidence to eliminate competition. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Call the shots, and you'll outperform any competition you encounter. Make plans to kick back and spend time with someone who puts a smile on your face. Romance will lead to a commitment that will improve your life. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Concentrate on gathering information, clarifying what your options are and making financial decisions that will buy you the freedom to enjoy the comforts and conveniences you desire. Setting up a budget and a plan will ease stress and uncertainty. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Let go of regrets and mistakes, and channel your energy into what matters to you. Dedicating your time and effort to something you feel passionate about will give you a sense of pride and hope for a better future. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Put more effort into the way you look and feel. Spending time updating your image or getting in tiptop shape will make you feel good and bolster confidence to pursue your goals. Trust your instincts, and avoid being taken for granted. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are spontaneous, enthusiastic and persistent. You are playful and charming.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

7		9				1		4
2	1			5			3	7
					9			
		2						
	5			4			6	
						7		
			7					
9	4			1			7	8
8		5				2		9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 10/15

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	8	1	2	7	5	3	9	4
9	7	2	3	6	4	8	1	5
3	4	5	8	9	1	6	2	7
2	5	6	9	1	7	4	3	8
8	1	7	5	4	3	9	6	2
4	9	3	6	8	2	7	5	1
1	3	8	7	5	6	2	4	9
5	6	9	4	2	8	1	7	3
7	2	4	1	3	9	5	8	6

Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

IN A JAPANESE RESTAURANT Solution: 10 letters

M	S	L	O	O	T	S	D	L	A	F	A	T	T	Y
I	O	U	F	O	R	E	I	G	N	Y	U	Z	U	H
S	G	R	M	S	A	D	O	N	B	U	R	I	S	A
U	O	A	I	P	Y	U	I	I	H	E	R	R	T	M
S	D	M	N	M	T	M	K	R	S	O	E	E	U	A
A	P	O	E	U	O	U	A	I	N	O	E	F	R	C
S	L	M	N	N	J	T	O	M	N	W	Ⓢ	B	G	H
H	A	A	U	O	M	N	O	U	S	I	Ⓐ	U	E	I
I	T	Y	S	S	I	H	A	R	S	D	Ⓚ	M	O	R
M	E	I	M	A	T	A	T	M	O	I	Ⓔ	A	N	O
I	M	C	F	O	S	A	C	U	U	P	S	Y	Y	T
H	P	S	R	D	U	H	R	R	P	S	P	O	A	I
S	U	B	Y	E	B	M	O	D	E	R	N	A	B	K
U	R	B	U	N	A	R	I	C	E	M	I	L	S	A
S	A	C	E	R	E	M	O	N	Y	M	E	A	T	Y

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Beef, Broth, Ceremony, Cream, Creme, Curry, Dips, Donburi, Faldstool, Fatty, Foreign, Fry, Hamachi, Lime, Manju, Mayo, Meat, Mirin, Miso, Mitsuba, Modern, Morimoto, Mustard, Nori, Oden, Plate, Rice, Sake, Sapporo, Sashimi, Soba, Semen, Sosu, Soup, Sturgeon, Sumptuous, Sushi, Sweet, Tatami, Tempura, Tray, Tuna, Udon, Unagi, Yakiniku, Yakitori, Yunomi, Yuzu

Yesterday's Answer: Statements

Jo's Jewels Collector's Edition is back by popular demand! Purchase online at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480.

Going the distance: Giants-Dodgers headed to Game 5

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It is only fitting that 70 years after Bobby Thomson's "Shot Heard 'Round the World" that the Giants and Dodgers will play in another all-or-nothing game.

Los Angeles' 7-2 win over San Francisco on Tuesday night in Game 4 of the NL Division Series evened the series and sent the first Major League Baseball playoff matchup between teams with at least 105 wins to Game 5 Thursday night at San Francisco's Oracle Park.

"This is what baseball wants. I mean, I think, as I understand, all the series are done and so we're going to be the only show in town. So if you have a pulse or you're a sports fan, you better be watching Dodgers-Giants," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said.

This will be the third time that two heated rivals will meet in a deciding game to see who advances. The 1951 and 1962 National League tiebreaker series both went to third games, with the Giants winning both to advance to the World Series.

This time the winner gets a date with the Atlanta Braves in the NL Championship Series. Game 1 will be Saturday night in either Atlanta or San Francisco.

Kapler said that Logan Webb will get the start. The 24-year-old right-hander will be the youngest Giants pitcher to start a deciding game.

Webb will make his fifth start this season against the Dodgers. He threw 7 2/3 shutout innings, struck out 10 and allowed only five hits in San Francisco's 4-0 victory last Friday in Game 1.

AP

Los Angeles Dodgers right fielder Mookie Betts kneels in the outfield during a delay after a spectator ran onto the field during the seventh inning of Game 4 of the baseball team's National League Division Series against the San Francisco Giants, Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2021, in Los Angeles.

"I don't think we're going to spend a lot of time dissecting as a team this game. I think we're going to get on the plane, have an off day, a real off day," Giants manager Gabe Kapler said. "We'll schedule our workout for a little bit later. We'll start getting ready for Game 5.

"I'm sure it will be a lively atmosphere. It's going to be nice to get back to Oracle and have the support of our fans. And, yeah, we're looking forward to it," he said.

Roberts said before Tuesday's game that Julio Urías will get the call in the deciding game. Urías, who led the majors in victories and was the Dodgers' first 20-game winner since Clayton Kershaw in 2014, will be facing San Francisco for the seventh time this year. The left-hander allowed one run on three hits in five innings in the Dodgers' 9-2 victory in Game 2 last Saturday.

The Giants, who won 107 games during the regular season, took 10 of the 19 regular-season meetings. That one-win edge ended up giving San Francisco its first NL West title since 2012 over the wild-card Dodgers, who won 106.

Thursday night will be this season's 24th and final meeting.

" I think the playbook is kind of we know each other's playbook, so now it just goes to old school, we're going to run the ball to the right and you're going to have to stop us and it's the Vince Lombardi," Roberts said. "So it's like we're going to play, we know what we do, they know what we do, we know who they want to have the baseball in Game 5, they know who we want and the matchups that we're trying to get, now it's about going out there and executing and the best team wins."

Kapler also echoed Roberts' sentiments and added that they aren't about to deviate from what they have done all season.

"I've said this throughout the year, but the lineup that we throw out there against lefties, the lineup that we throughout there last time against Julio, I feel really good about," Kapler said. "It's a lot of high-quality hitters, guys that see pitches, that can hit home runs against left-handed pitching, and their track record suggests that."

These two franchises that began meeting up in 1884 share a bond in these deciding games -- much to the Giants' delight.

Thomson connected for one of the most famous home runs in baseball history, a three-run drive in the bottom of the ninth inning lifted the New York Giants over Jackie Robinson and the Brooklyn Dodgers 5-4 at the Polo Grounds in 1951.

The longtime rivalry had moved from the East Coast to the West Coast when they met again in 1962 in a best-of-three matchup for the NL pennant. San Francisco beat Sandy Koufax in the opener, then lost to Los Angeles to set up another Game 3. Giants great Willie Mays delivered a key hit during a four-run rally in the ninth inning in a 6-4 win at Dodger Stadium.

At this point, they've each won 109 times this season. Now, it's down to one game once more.

"I think it's only fitting," Dodgers pitcher Walker Buehler said.

Red Sox ride home run laundry cart to ALCS against Astros

BOSTON (AP)—It was the middle of the pandemic, the Boston Red Sox stunk, and with major league ballparks empty in 2020, they couldn't even count on the crowd to get them going. During one especially humdrum road game at the Rays' Tropicana Field, coach Jason Varitek suggested they needed to put some fun back into the game.

The words had barely left his lips when Christian Vázquez hit a homer. So backup catcher Kevin Plawecki grabbed a nearby laundry cart, waited for Vázquez to return to the dugout, and told him, "Hey, hop in."

"We hadn't talked about it — nothing," Plawecki said on Wednesday. "He sat right in, and I pushed him. And ever since it's been our thing, I guess."

The 2004 Red Sox were "The Idiots." In '13 they grew bushy beards. And if the 2021 team performs like its predecessors and wins the World Series, the lingering image could be "Tunnel Time" — the home run laundry cart drive through the dugout.

Started on a lark in a last-place season, the Red Sox have continued the celebration this year and ridden it all the way to a spot in the AL Championship Series, which begins Friday night in Houston.

"It looked great in a difficult season for them to be able to find something that's fun, and be able to celebrate something in the game," manager Alex Cora said. "It means a lot for them. For them to have fun with that, that's great."

Sports teams have long found unique ways to celebrate their wins and other milestones, from the now routine post-victory Gatorade bath to jackets or jewelry awarded for big plays.

Even in baseball, where traditionalists sneer at anything that might seem disrespectful or undignified, teams haven't been afraid to show some personality.

The Phillies have a straw Home Run Hat, the Rockies have "homer shades," and the Blue Jays have a blue blazer for members of their "HR Club." The New York Mets ride a stuffed pony through the dugout to celebrate homers; the San Diego Padres pass around a seven-pound bejeweled necklace dubbed the " Swagg Chain."

AP

In this May 4, 2021, file photo, Boston Red Sox's Xander Bogaerts high-fives teammates while being pushed in a laundry cart through the dugout after his two-run home run against the Detroit Tigers during the second inning of a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston.

During their 2019 World Series run, Washington Nationals car buffs Adam Eaton and Howie Kendrick celebrated by pretending to drive in the dugout — stepping on an imaginary clutch, shifting fake gears and making loud revving engine noises with their mouths.

"Everybody's got their own way of having fun. That's what it's all about," Plawecki said in an on-field interview during batting practice at Fenway Park. "It's not an 'In your face' to anybody. It's just a way for us to have fun, keep it light."

Boston's cart is now a new, customized model that may never have been touched by actual laundry; it even had it's own bobble head day (though the Red Sox will tell you that the giveaway honored J.D. Martinez, who was riding in it).

During the playoffs, infielder José Iglesias has taken responsibility for the "carrito," and declared himself the official chauffeur. Acquired too late in the season to be eligible for the playoff roster, Iglesias said he was happy to contribute in the dugout, since he can't on the field.

"It's a good way for him to stay involved with the guys," Plawecki said. "I know it kills him to not actually be out there with us. He's such a help for all of us."

Plawecki said he had no regrets about giving up his cart-driving duties. After all, the way the Red Sox are going, he needs to save his energy: Boston hit two homers in an AL wild-card victory over the rival Yankees and nine more in the four-game Division Series win over Tampa Bay — a franchise postseason record five of them in Game 2 alone.

"They kept me very, very busy," Iglesias said. "And I hope I get busier over the course of the playoffs."

The Lakers may be ones to catch in West

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

It may be a roster like none other.

The Los Angeles Lakers have four of the NBA's top seven active scorers. The top three leading active rebounders. Three of the top four active leaders in assists. Three of the top five in blocks. Three of the top five in wins. Four of the top six in steals. They could even have five Olympic gold medalists on the floor at once and another on the bench.

Given all that talent — LeBron James leading the way, with a half-dozen players on the roster with at least reasonable chances of one day being elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame — it's easy to see why the Lakers would be a fashionable pick to emerge as the Western Conference representative in the NBA Finals this season.

"I'm excited for what's in store for us this year," James said. "But every day is a process. Every day, it's all about the journey and then you just put in the work."

James and Anthony Davis are back from the team that won the 2020 NBA championship — two seasons, yet only 12 months ago. Talen Horton-Tucker was also on that team, but didn't play in the NBA Finals. Everyone else is new, or sort of new, to the Lakers.

Rajon Rondo and Dwight Howard were on that team, left the Lakers and since returned. Russell Westbrook, Carmelo Anthony and DeAndre Jordan were among those added this offseason.

Anthony, Trevor Ariza, James, Howard and Rondo are all 35 or older already, and Wayne Ellington — another newcomer — turns 34 in November.

"The narrative about our age, I kind of laugh at it," James said. "I really do laugh. I'm not just saying that."

Even with all that proven talent, the Lakers are no lock to get back to the finals. A look at the West, in predicted order of finish:

PLAYOFF BOUND

1. Los Angeles Lakers. Old, yes. Good, yes. Really good ... time will tell. James convinced players like Anthony and Westbrook to run with him, which suggests he's loading up for a title run.

2. Phoenix Suns. Chris Paul, Devin Booker and Deandre Ayton made it work last season, but the Suns won't be surprising anyone this year. Coach Monty Williams pushed every right button last season.

3. Utah Jazz. Donovan Mitchell's ankle played a big role in Utah's playoff demise last season. He's raring to go, and with him, Rudy Gobert and Joe Ingles there's no reason why the Jazz shouldn't think title.

4. Denver Nuggets. Michael Malone remains one of the league's underrated coaches. Reigning MVP Nikola Jokic is all-worldly good, Jamal Murray will be back and Denver's defense gives it a chance every night.

5. Golden State Warriors. Stephen Curry was MVP-level good last year. Klay Thompson's return will be a big lift whenever it happens. Andre Iguodala returns for his final season. There's nothing not to like here.

6. Dallas Mavericks. Luka Doncic just keeps getting better and better. New coach Jason Kidd, who won a title in Dallas as a player, will have this team scoring a ton of points. The wild-card: Kristaps Porzingis.

INTO THE PLAY-IN

7. Los Angeles Clippers. The Clippers might do just enough to get into the playoff mix, then get a healthy and well-rested Kawhi Leonard back from his knee rehab for the stretch run. A scary proposition for opponents.

8. Portland Trail Blazers. Damian Lillard is as good of a scorer and leader as there is in the game, and surely will benefit from being part of the Olympic team this summer. Blazers must — must — take a leap forward.

9. San Antonio Spurs. The easiest thing Gregg Popovich could have done was take his Olympic gold medal, retire and enjoyed wine for the rest of his life. He came back for a reason. Don't forget the Spurs.

10. Memphis Grizzlies. Steven Adams playing pick-and-roll with Ja Morant should lead to automatic scores. And Morant is on his way to elite, without question. But the Grizzlies are still so very young.

FACING LONG ODDS

11. New Orleans Pelicans. Zion Williamson is the key to everything. If he's great, they'll be higher.

12. Sacramento Kings. This is way too low for the Kings. Then again, the West is also that good.

13. Minnesota Timberwolves. This is the T'Wolves fate — unless they are winners of the Ben Simmons Trade Sweepstakes.

14. Houston Rockets. Jalen Green is going to put up enormous numbers and contend for top rookie.

15. Oklahoma City Thunder. At some point, the basketball world will learn what all those draft picks will become.

WHAT TO KNOW

FANDUEL SAYS ...

FanDuel Sportsbook also lists the Lakers as the pick to come out of the West, since the Lakers are the second-choice behind Brooklyn when it comes to NBA title odds. The other top five NBA Finals contenders in the West, in order, based on FanDuel odds: Golden State, Utah, Phoenix, then the Clippers.

When just betting on the West race, the order is a bit different with a top five of the Lakers, Golden State and the Clippers tied for second, followed by Utah and Phoenix.

MVP RACE

There has never been a stretch of four consecutive international MVPs in the NBA. That might change this year, if a couple of West stars do what many expect they will. Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo won in 2019 and 2020, Jokic won in 2021, and Jokic and Doncic have to be considered among the front-runners in 2022.

TO THE END

The last shot James took in the 2020-21 regular season was a made layup with 6:41 left in the season finale against New Orleans, giving him 25 points. He was subbed out six seconds later and didn't return. The significance was this: It gave James a scoring average of 25.02 points for the season — extending his record streak of 25-point-average seasons to 17 in a row. Had he not gotten that final basket, he'd have averaged 24.98 points and (technically, anyway) the streak would have ended.

3'S REMAIN WILD

Utah set an NBA record last season by averaging 16.7 made 3-pointers per game. That means the top seven entries on that list in NBA history are all filled by West teams: Houston (16.1 in 2018-19), Portland (15.7 last season), Houston (15.6 in 2019-20), Houston (15.3 in 2017-18), Dallas (15.1 in 2019-20) and Golden State (14.6 last season).

WEST VS. EAST

The champs may hail from Milwaukee and the Eastern Conference, but the Western Conference — again — won the head-to-head against the other side of the league last season. West teams won 54% of their games against the East. It marked the 12th straight season and 21st time in the last 22 years that the West held a edge over the East.

Simmons drama drags on for 76ers without a resolution

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP)—This much is known: Ben Simmons is back in Philadelphia. But there's no clear sign yet the All-Star guard is set to rescind his trade request and actually play for the 76ers.

Even coach Doc Rivers — publicly, at least—says he's unsure of the status of the trade demand, the latest wrinkle in the on-again-off-again relationship between Simmons and the Sixers.

"I don't know. He's voiced that, but we'll see how that works out," Rivers said Wednesday at team practice.

A rescinded request seems improbable, though Rivers said Simmons "was great, he was good" when the two met on Tuesday, a day after the three-time All-Star surprised the franchise by showing up to its arena during a preseason game to take a COVID-19 test.

Rivers said Simmons was scheduled to return to the practice facility late Wednesday for an individual workout and will not practice with the team until he clears NBA health and safety protocols.

That is, if Simmons returns to play at all.

That's still a big if for the Sixers, especially with one more preseason game Friday at Detroit before next week's season opener at New Orleans. Much like Marshawn Lynch at a Super Bowl media day, Simmons may be here only so he won't get fined. The 25-year-old from Australia has four years and $147 million left on his max contract — though the 76ers placed in escrow $8.25 million due to the guard, and fines for missing games and practices could be subtracted from that amount.

Rivers, who turned 60 on Wednesday, said he wanted Simmons to play.

"I'm assuming he's going to play, but who knows? I can't get in anyone's head," Rivers said.

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NMIBF hosts first 3x3 tournament

The Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation will be holding its first 3x3 competition of the season tomorrow, Saturday, at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The event, which is dubbed as the NMIBF 3x3 Hoop Fest and will be held in collaboration with FIBA Oceania, will feature games in three divisions with the women's field drawing 10 teams, the men's category having eight squads, and the boys U18 age group getting six.

"We are excited to host our first 3x3 tournament this season and look forward to see more teams and more competitions next year," NMIBF president James Lee said.

The NMIBF head is specifically upbeat on the boys U18 division, as the event is part of the federation's assistance to member-clubs. The boys U18 division will have the Ol'Aces Real Deal, Tinian Typhoon, MadFlex, San Antonio Sixers, Chinatown Chargers, and the Rollers' Undercooked Rolls.

"We are reaching out to clubs to see how we can help them grow their own program. We've seen their players practicing in various village courts the past few months and we want to provide them an opportunity to showcase what they learn from their practices and continue their development," Lee added.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Players and coaches participating in the NMIBF 3x3 Hoop Fest pose with Tan Siu Lin Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino, 11th left, and Northern Marianas Islands Basketball Federation officials during the jersey donation turnover ceremony yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

There are no registration fees for the U18 teams/clubs and they are also provided with free jerseys, courtesy of the Tan Siu Lin Foundation.

"We are thankful to the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for their continued support to CNMI basketball, especially our youth program. They've supported us with the summer camp, the interscholastic program, and now the youth teams participating in our 3x3 tournament," Lee said.

TSL Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino said they are pleased to partner with the NMIBF in the 3x3 competition, as the foundation promotes the participation of more youths in health and wellness activities, such as sports tournaments.

Meanwhile, teams that will be vying for the women's division title include Acers, Team Agape, Alley-Oops, That One Team, Shammi, Small Giants, CrushOver, Tinian Typhoon, Gang Gang, and BellaBalls. In the men's division, the field has Outlaws, Roll'Aces, Tinian Typhoon, Bebenome3, End Game, Dixon Cider, The Game, and Hole in the Wall.

Matches will start at 9:30am, while title games will be played in the afternoon, beginning at 4:15pm. Medals will be awarded to the Top 2 finishers in each division. ***(PR)***

NMIVA national athlete, coaches meeting tomorrow

The Northern Marianas Islands Volleyball Association is requesting all interested individuals who would like to participate as a coach or athlete for the CNMI National Volleyball Teams (beach and indoor) to attend an organizational meeting tomorrow, Oct. 16, at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

The meeting for athletes and coaches who are interested in participating in beach volleyball for the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 will begin at 5pm. The meeting for athletes and coaches who are interested in indoor volleyball for the 2022 Micronesian Games will begin at 6pm. These meetings are for both men's and women's teams.

All interested individuals must be at least 16 years old. Some discussion topics will include event info for the 2022 Mini Games and 2022 Micronesian Games, athlete eligibility, and try-out information. All interested athletes and coaches can RSVP on NMIVA Facebook event page or show up to the respective meeting times. ***(PR)***

Mini Games golf team announced tomorrow

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The CNMI National Golf Team for the 2022 Northern Marianas Mini Games will be announced tomorrow immediately following the final qualifier organized by the Commonwealth Federation of Golf Associations at the Coral Ocean Resort.

The national team will be made up of two men's players, two junior men's players, two women's players, and two junior women's players.

Based on results of the first four qualifiers, Harry Nakamura is leading in the men's division with a two-round score of 152. He's followed by J.J. Atalig with a 154. Joe Sasamoto is at third with a 155, while, Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho and Peter "Dung" Tenorio are tied in fourth place at 156.

In the women's, Yuko Togawa currently leads with a score of 176, followed by Nirimai Koebel and Hyun Son with 182 and 183, respectively.

In the men's juniors, Zhi Li is heads and shoulders above the field with a 161 with Joshua Atalig running second at 174. Zhimin Jin is holding the fort in the women's juniors with her 172, followed by Soarin Oh's 225.

CFoGA earlier said that the selection of the national team will based on the two lowest scores plus the score in tomorrow's final tryout, where all vying for spots for the Mini Games will have to walk the course and can't use golf carts.

The eight-person national golf team for next year's Mini Games will be presented during the awards banquet for the Black Jack Golf Tournament that will be held at the same time as the final qualifier. Entry fee for the one-day tournament is $100 and all the proceeds will benefit the CNMI National Golf Team.

For more information on the CFoGA tryouts for the Mini Games and the Black Jack Golf Tournament, call CFoGA social and media officer Geri Dela Cruz at 783-4287 or vice president J.J. Atalig at 285-1612.

KANOA

From Page 24

Paire Football Club, 7-3.

Audrey Castro led MP United's first victory after firing six of the team's total goals. Stephanie Kim tallied the other goal for MP United, while Paire got one apiece from Miranda Borja, Justidy Mizutani, and Phoenix Gross.

BOYS U15
MP United 5, Matansa 0

MP United also triumphed in the boys U15 division after blanking Matansa in the curtain-raiser.

Isaiah Barcinas had a hat-trick for MP United, which drew its two other goals from Casey Chambers.

Kanoa 9, Paire 1

Paire got win No. 3 in as many games after dominating Paire in the second game in the triple-header last weekend.

Christopher Daickichy registered three goals for Paire, while Markus Toves made two, and Vicente Reyes, Paul Lizama, Quin Palacios, and Arstin Tagabuel chipped in one apiece. Paire's lone goal was courtesy of Dyson Danis.

TanHoldings 17, Shirley's 0

TanHoldings matched Kanoa's perfect record after pouncing on Shirley's in the nightcap.

Mark Joseph Patubo scored the most goals for TanHoldings with four, while four of his teammates also logged multiple goals.

CO-ED U12
MPU Pink 1, MPU Blue 1

MP United kept the lead in the division after forcing a draw against MP United Blue.

Francisco Maratita delivered the equalizer for MPU Pink in the second half, while Stephen Yeom recorded the first-half goal for MPU Blue.

MP United Pink now holds a 2-1-0 mark, just slightly ahead of Paire (2-0-0), which took a bye in Week 3 of the league.

Kanoa-1 9, Kanoa-2 1

Kanoa-1 notched its first win of the season after pounding Kanoa-2.

Akoni Matsumoto scored four goals for Kanoa-1, while Kanoa-2 got its lone goal from Ye Lynn Ha.

Matansa 3, TanHoldings 2

Matansa also earned its first victory in the competition after nosing out TanHoldings.

Antonio Megino posted two goals for Matansa, including the go-ahead in the 45th minute. His other goal came in the third, while Yutaka Kadokura scored Matansa's second in the 35th.

Kian Estolas and Julio Monserrat made the pair of goals for TanHoldings.

VELORIA

From Page 24

loria and Jadel Ignacio clash in the loser's bracket finals.

In Group B, Noel Watiwat and Tisha Ferrer advanced to the finals after beating Leonard Manuel and Marielle Lim, 21-10, 21-18. The latter will now duel Ian Lubao and Patricia Surima in the loser's bracket finals.

A total of 29 players are competing in the TakeCare Insurance Co., Inc.-sponsored tournament. The finals and other matches of the men's and women's singles, men's and women's doubles, and mixed doubles in the A, B, and C divisions will be held this weekend.

RAYPHAND

From Page 24

ing the Top 3 in 7.03. Gross helped SIS win the team gold medal award along with Leilani Ruszala, Neveah Arriola, and Michelle Im.

Northern Marianas Athletics cross country director Dr. Ron Snyder said this year's cross country season was an amazing success.

"Despite the added restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 400 athletes were able to compete in our four meets, with 230 runners at the championships. This tremendous feat could not have been possible without the strong leadership of the Public School System and Northern Marianas Athletics as well as the community partnerships with Saipan International School, Run Saipan and Kagman High School," he said.

Snyder said these partnerships made the races more fun for the students by allowing organizers to spread the courses across the beautiful island on Saipan.

"I hope to see more schools become hosts in the future to increase both the quantity and quality of competitions for athletes in this amazing sport. Having the three preliminary meets as open competitions really allowed us to build a sense of community and team. Team is the hallmark of cross country where individual successes contribute to the overall team score and where any school can strive for first place," he said.

The Public School System partnered with Northern Marianas Athletics, the governing body of athletics in the CNMI, to organize track and field as well as cross country events in the 2021-22 school year.

NMSA recognizes athletes/teams for July, August

ATHLETES of the MONTH

The Northern Marianas Sports Association hailed five athletes and two teams for their outstanding athletic performance in July and August. Awardees are eligible to be named athletes/team of the year and will be recognized at the annual NMSA Awards Banquet.

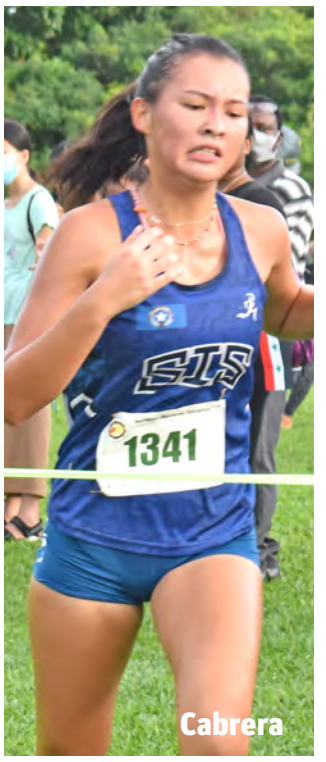
Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan's Maria Batallones was named July female student-athlete of the month after she topped the 1,000m race in the Saipan Swim Club Triple Crown Open Water Swim Series 1 and 2 held last July 10 and July 24.

The 12-year-old timed in at 14:47.70 minutes in Series 1, ruling the women's field, which also included adult swimmers. Batallones' time was almost 3 minutes ahead of her closest competitor and she even outraced six of the seven male entries in the 1,000m competition.

In Series 2, Batallones surpassed her Series 1 time after recording 11:09.87, more than a minute ahead of the second-place finisher. Batallones' times in Series 1 and 2 were faster than the records of swimmers that joined the 1,000m qualifier for the 2021 FINA World Championships in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The female winner in the qualifier in Series 2 posted 11:29.47, while the two others selected completed the course in more than 12 minutes. In Series 1, the three qualifiers had finish times of more than 15 minutes.

Aleksenko

Calderwood



Cabrera

Tsunami Saipan's Isaiah Aleksenko was named male student-athlete of the month after won the 1,500m event in both the SSC Triple Crown Open Water Swim Series 1 and 2 held last July 10 and 24.

In Series 1, the 14-year-old clocked in at 18:23.10—the fastest time in the event's longest open water swim—defeating 16 other swimmers, including adult participants, and was nearly one minute ahead of the second finisher. The CNMI does not keep records for ocean swim, but for comparison purposes, the islands' 13 to 14 age group record in the 1,500m freestyle swim is 18:14.65 and in the last 1,500m ocean swim held before the pandemic, the top finisher took nearly 23 minutes to complete the course. In Series 2, Aleksenko finished at 19:25.92, the fastest among the 21 adult and junior swimmers.

Heather Calderwood was named female athlete of the month for July after she came in first place in the women's 6.5-mile V1 long-distance race held in July in the waters off Kilili Beach. Winds were strong, the seas were rough, and the battle for first place was close. The 31-year-old came out on top of the women's open long-distance category. Calderwood was introduced to the va'a paddling sport in early March of this year. Born on Saipan and a graduate of Marianas High School, Calderwood's homecoming has been a dream come true. She enjoys the ocean and environment. With just four months of paddling experience, Calderwood's physical fitness, positive attitude, willingness to learn, and train hard resulted in a first-place victory.

SUFC Womens Team

Tarkong

Male athlete of the month for July, Jason Tarkong, won the 6.5-mile long-distance V1 race held in the waters off Kilili Beach. The wind conditions and seas were rough, and the battle for first place was a close one. The route was from Kilili Beach, north to Garapan Fishing Base and back. Tarkong took first place in the race. His accomplishments include former NMSA team of the month with Marianas Outrigger Club for May 2021, representing the CNMI winning a gold medal in the 1,500m sprints at the 2014 Micronesian Games in Pohnpei, and again with Team CNMI winning a silver medal for the long-distance 12-mile-long distance race at the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap. As the head coach for Napu Outrigger Canoe Club and active team member of the MOC, he has proven that at 54 years old, age is nothing but a number.

The Tan Holdings Football Club U15 Girls Soccer Team was named July team of the month after winning the championship of the recently concluded NMIFA Summer Youth League. The team dominated the division by winning all their matches. They scored 60 goals in the initial round-robin series and then added another 22 goals in the championship round. They were also the best defensive team conceding only six goals during the entire season. The U15 Girls Division played the 5 vs. 5 format. The team is comprised of Kaithlyn Chavez, Audrey Castro, Rizza Relucio, Tamia Hix, Matty Angeles, Julie Ann Chavez, Aubrey Castro, Julie Ann Capayas, and Mia Abuan. The team's coach is Albert Bergancia. Most of the players are already members of the Girls national team or the NMIFA Junior National (Soccer) Academy.

August female student athlete of the month, Tiana Cabrera, is an incredibly committed runner. She trains with Northern Marianas Athletics, Run Saipan, and with Saipan International School's team.

Batallones

She has taken on a leadership role at the school and is always encouraging. She has won many local events over the last year, including two in the month of August.

She has had setbacks, like every athlete, but uses these to improve her running. She really is the face of distance running among the student athletes on the island. When she started at SIS, she was the No. 3 runner, but her perseverance has led her to grow in skill and athleticism so that she can be counted on to always have a top performance. In addition to her commitment to running and her leadership of the team, Cabrera is also one of the key student-coaches who will be working with Tanapag Middle School students to develop their team for the 2021-22 season.

Southern United Football Club (SUFC) Women's Team is August team of the month after emerging the champion of the recently concluded Dove Women's League Tinekcha Division, the premier or top division. The team had the best record—5 wins and 1 loss. Although the division had only four teams, this division was very competitive because most players are current or former national team players, or those who are in the national training pool. Most players in this SUFC Team are in the women national teams. These ladies train several days a week. To remain competitive and to sharpen their skills, those in the women's national team also compete in the B Division of the NMIFA Men's League. Members of the team are Allyssa Angeles, Christina Atalig, Nathanette Blas, Jenny Ann Capayas, Jannah Casarino, Keisha de Leon Guerrero, Marinel Falalimpa, Stephanie Flores, Tyana Hix, Haidee Manibusan, and Britany Wally. The team's head coach is Ruselle Zapanta. ***(PR)***

Teack, Deleon Guerrero are SGA aces for Aug., Sept.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jung Eun Teack and Larry Deleon Guerrero are the latest qualifiers for the Saipan Golf Association's yearend Aces of Aces Tournament after winning the August and September monthly tournaments, respectively.

Teack topped the August tournament after shooting a net 66 last Sept. 19 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. The 15-handicapper's winning score was built around a gross of 81 (41-40).

In the closest to the pin competition, Alex Tudela won hole No. 4, while Tony Benavente topped hole No. 6. Teack ruled hole No. 11, while Joe Demapam was without peer in hole No. 15. Alex Tudela and Edward Sablan won the longest drives in holes No. 2 and 18.

Deleon Guerrero, meanwhile, won the September ace after topping the monthly competition last Sept. 26 at the east course of the same Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

The September winner, who has an 18 handicap, scored a net 94 after a 47 in the first nine holes and a 45 in the last nine holes.

In the closest to the pin, Ed Sablan topped hole No. 4, with Ed Manibusan winning holes No. 6 and 15. Rick Kautz triumphed in hole No. 1.

In the longest drive, Mariano Fajardo out-clubbed everyone in hole No. 2, while Deleon Guerrero brought the lumber in hole No. 10.

By winning the tournament in August and September, Teack and Deleon Guerrero now join SGA's 2021 Ace of the Month winners Das Krishnan (January), Joe I. Sablan (February), Frances M. Sablan (March), Rick Kautz (April), Tony Benavente (May), Ed Manibusan (June), and Nick Sablan (July) for the yearend championship

The next SGA October Ace of the Month Tournament will be held this Sunday, Oct. 17, at the Kingfisher Golf Links in Talafofo. Tee time is at 9:30am with a showtime at 9am.

Going the distance: Giants-Dodgers headed to Game 5

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NMSA recognizes athletes/teams for July, August

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Kanoa, TanHoldings pummel foes

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Southern United FC's Pia Ngewakl, left, takes a shot in front of TaHoldings FC's Kaithlyn Chavez, right, during their girls U15 division game in the 2021 NMIFA Youth Fall League last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Kanoa Football Club and TanHoldings Football Club routed their respective opponents to remain in the Top 2 of the team rankings in the girls U15 division of 2021 NMIFA Youth Fall League.

TanHoldings crushed Southern United FC, 8-1, in the final game in the division last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville to improve to a 3-0-0 win-draw-loss record and keep the top spot in the leaderboard.

Kaithlyn Chavez powered TanHoldings to the easy win after delivering four goals. Mia Abuan contributed two, while Rizza Relucio and Tamia Hix had one each. Pia Ngewakl logged the lone goal for Southern United.

In the other one-sided game, Kanoa hammered Shirley's Football Club 7-0, for a 2-0-1 mark and a share of second spot with Southern United.

Deseha Mendiola scored three goals to lift Kanoa to the shutout victory. Joselyn Atalig chipped in two goals, while Keziah and Isabel Manabat added one apiece.

Meanwhile, MP United broke into the win column this season after outclassing

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Veloria, Borja, Tolentino advance to two finals in C division

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sefric Veloria, Yoko Borja, and Merlie Tolentino are currently shining in the C division of the of the TakeCare Badminton Open 2021 after each advanced to multiple finals last weekend at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Veloria is in the finals of the men's singles after beating Dez Antonio, 21-19, 21-10, in their semifinals matchup. He will face Paolo Quidato in the finals after the latter beat Antonio in a cliffhanger, 21-20, 21-20, in the loser's bracket finals.

Pairing with singles opponent Antonio this time, Veloria is also onto the championship round of the men's doubles after they beat Leonard Manuel and Noel Watiwat, 21-15, 21-12.

Borja advanced to the finals of the women's singles after getting the better of Lani Santos, 20-7, 21-10, in Group A. She also punched a finals ticket in the women's doubles after teaming up with Hiroko Tajima in beating Minhee Ho and Lala Augustino, 21-13, 21-12, in Group A.

Borja's opponent in the women's singles finals is Merlie Tolentino after the Northern Marianas Badminton Association president defeated Gladys Dacumos, 21-15, 21-18, in Group B. Tolentino also advanced to the finals in the women's doubles A after she and Lani Santos outlasted Sophia Quintos and Gigi Zapanta, 21-19, 15-21, 21-17.

In the mixed doubles, Antonio and Hiroko Tajima advanced to the Group A finals after beating Jerry Tan and Irish Pagarao, 21-10, 21-7. They now await the winner of the Tan/Pagarao and Sefric Ve-

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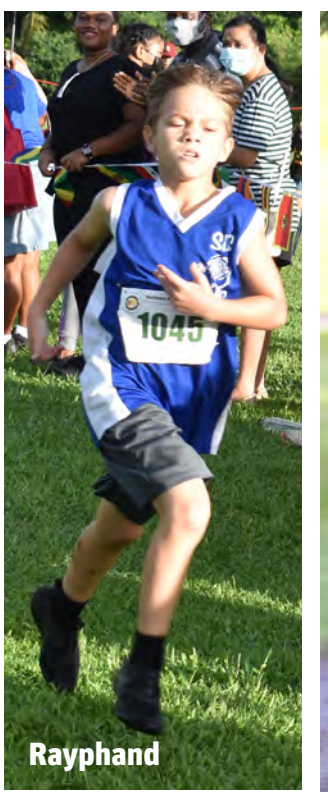
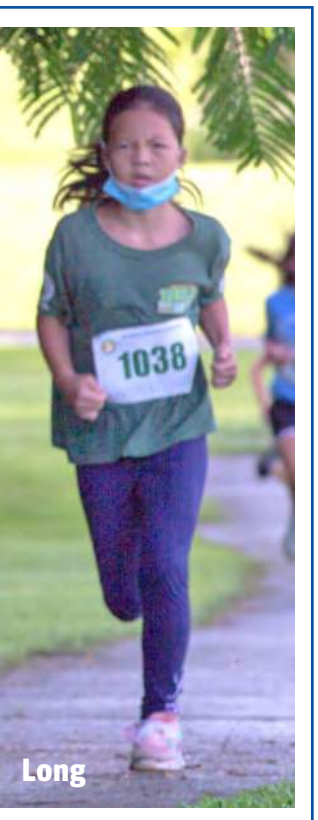
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sefric Veloria, left, and Yoko Borja have advanced to a couple of finals in the C division of the TakeCare Badminton Open 2021.



Rayphand



Long

Rayphand, Long swiftest in 9U XC championships

By MARK RABAGO
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Saipan International School's Jude Rayphand and Erica Long of Oleai Elementary School bagged gold medals in the 9U division of the 2021 PSS/NMA Cross Country Championships last Saturday at the old Saipan Country Club golf course behind Saipan Vegas.

Rayphand won the boys 9U 1.3-kilometer run with a time of 5.50. He was followed by Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School's Kylee Babauta with Garapan Elementary School's William Flores coming in third in 6.28.

With Rayphand spearheading the team, SIS took home the perpetual plaque for topping the boys 9U cross country championships. His teammates include Gabriel Walsh, Jake Duenas, Tristan Bertoncini, Philip Seman, and Carver Gross.

Long won the girls 9U 1.3-kilometer run after crossing the finish line in 6.36.67. Brilliant Star School's Scarlett Burrell was second in 6.53 with SIS' Windsor Gross complet-

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